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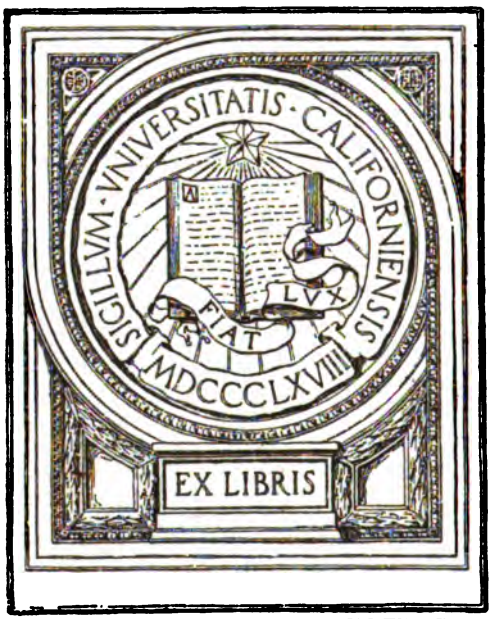

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A TRAMP IN SPAIN

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By the Same Author

A SAILOR TRAMP
DARAB'S WINE CUP
A MAN ADRIFT
LONDON IN SHADOW
THE WANDERING ROMANOFF

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THE GORGE OF THE GUADALEVIN

Frontispiece

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A TRAMP IN SPAIN

FROM ANDALUSIA TO ANDORRA

BY BART KENNEDY

THE AUTHOR OF
"A SAILOR TRAMP"

1914

LONDON GEORGE NEWNES LTD
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GIBRALTAR

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I.—AT THE GATE

I

We steamed slowly up the Strait of Gibraltar.

And here was the Rock rearing up sullen and tremendous from the waters. It looked grim and sullen even though the sky above it was blue and clear. A mighty rock shaped like a lion. Time and the elements had shaped it to the emblem of the power of Britain. A rock rising sullen and tremendous.

A lion guarding the gate of a great sea.

II

The sun shone on the sand of the isthmus that ran from the Rock into Spain. Along it a squad of soldiers were marching. In the distance their helmets made a sharp line of whiteness between the yellow of the sand and the blue of the sky above. A sharp line moving steadily. And yonder was another squad of marching soldiers. And yonder another. All marching.

* * * * *

Nearer and nearer we came to the Rock. And suddenly was heard the quick-running, slipping jag of a chain as the great anchor was falling through the water.

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And the steamer slewed round slowly—and lay still at her anchor. And in a moment men from alongside boats were up on her deck, and the derrick was swinging up freight out of the fore hatch. And soon those of us who were to get off at Gibraltar were aboard a small launch which was cutting sharply through the water towards the Old Mole—the landing-place.

* * * * *

I passed through a gate, and on and on through another gate, and I found myself in a rather narrow, bustling street. The heat was penetrating and intense. It was the end of June. The street was alive with English soldiers—alert-looking, yellow-clad, helmeted men—and Moors, moving with the long, slow pace of the desert, and Spaniards, and Jews, and men of many nations. And white-clad Englishmen. All were going up and down and passing and repassing through and across the street. There were Moors that were black and Moors that were almost white. The street had the bustle and the quick, sharp life-sounds of a street of the north of Europe. And still it looked Eastern. The fixed, dead blue of the sky above was the blue of the sky of the Orient, and the air had the hard glint that comes from intense, steady heat. It was surely an Oriental place controlled and dominated by the spirit and the force of the North. Here was the Orient. Here was the sky and the air and the heat of the Orient. Yonder was Spain. But this was the East. Here were the calm-eyed, slow-pacing Moors. These strange-faced men of the past. They were going along here in this town. This

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fortress town of theirs of the long ago. Calm-eyed, slow-pacing Arab men with strange faces. Going slowly along.

* * * * *

In the distance I heard the piercing call of a bugle. And there came down the street the sound of the tramping of many men. The steady clamp of hundreds of feet going as one dominated all other sounds in the street. A band began to play, but the clamping grew louder and louder. It surrounded and enclosed all other sounds. Here they were. Soldiers going along with alert, swinging steps. Men with set faces. Bayonets gleamed from rifles carried at the shoulder and light flashed from the blades of officers' swords. On they passed. Going together as one. Again in the distance came the clamp of coming men. They passed and were gone. And again came men. Soldiers were everywhere. Passing along in squads. Passing along in companies. Passing along in battalions. Now came a picket going easily along, keeping watch. And now came the guard going along with hurrying step to relieve sentries. Gibraltar was full of soldiers. Here, there, everywhere. It was a vast guard-house. An immense place of arms.

A lion guarding a gate.

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II.—PASSING INTO SPAIN

THE next morning I packed up my knapsack—and soon I was going down Waterport Street to board one of the boats that ran over the bay to Algeciras. On my way I dropped into a money-changer's to turn an English sovereign into Spanish coin. I got thirty-three pesetas and eighty cèntimos. The rate of exchange was marked up on a bulletin board outside the money-changer's office.

I was going to Spain armed with a revolver, a passport, a knapsack, and no knowledge of the language. My mission was at once unique and roving. I was to travel right from the south to the north to see how things looked to the absolutely new eye. I was to see as much of the life of the country as I could—to go into and explore the towns, to go through the mountains, to tramp through country parts, to see the cathedrals and places of art on my way, in fine, to see Spain from as many view-points as possible. My first definite point was Seville. I was to see a bull-fight there, and then I was to go on as my fancy led me. I was bound to the wheel of no plan.

My utter ignorance of the language was a positive advantage. No one would be able to tell me this or that or the other thing. I would have to use my eyes. Of course, many things would be hidden from me because of not knowing Spanish. But then, on the other hand, I

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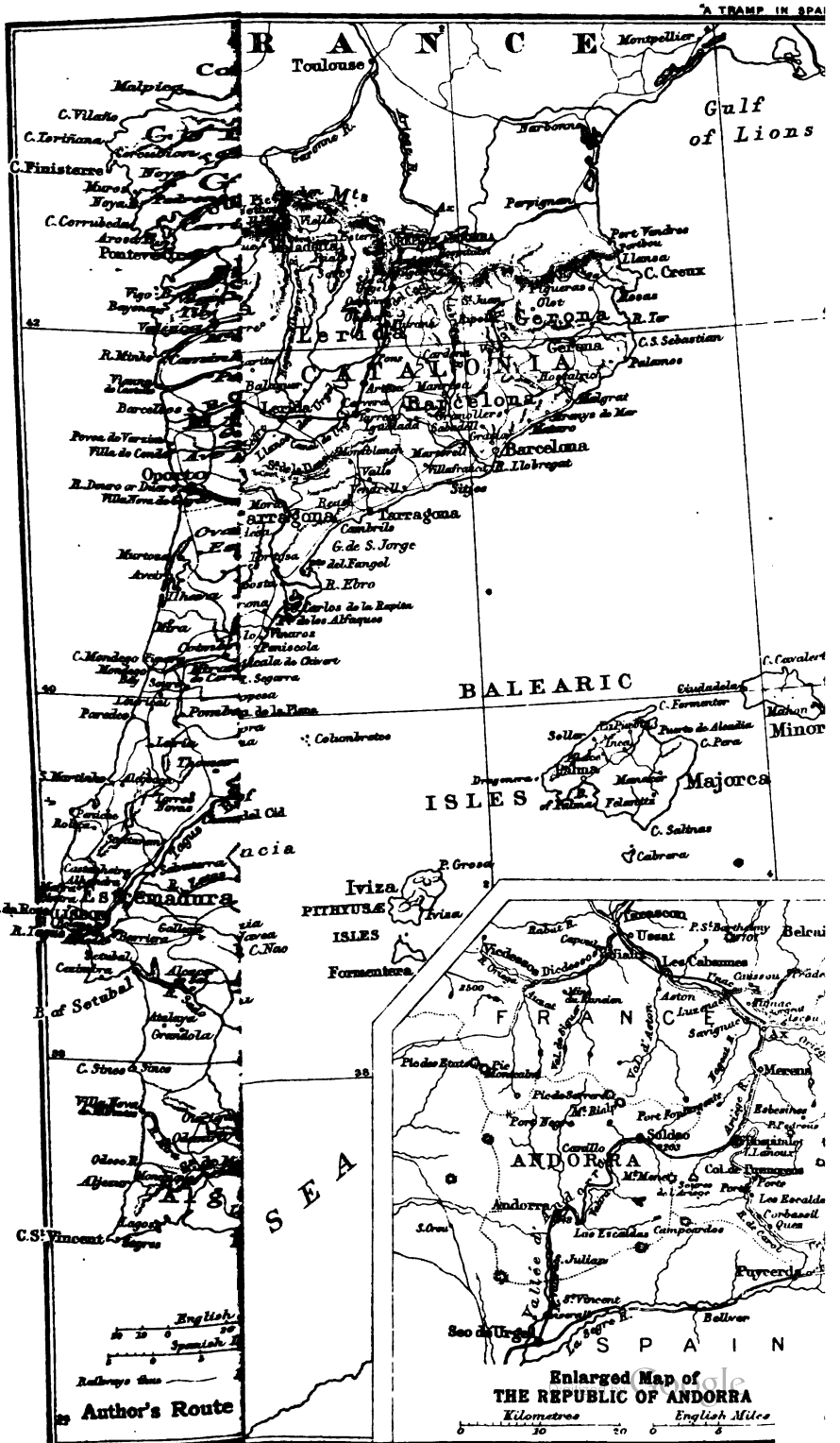
FRANCE
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Ovar
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Colombretes
S. Martinho
Caldas
Torres Vedras
Cascais
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C. da Roca
R. Tagus
Setubal
R. of Setubal
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Gavarnie
Bareges
Pic de Bugarach
Pic de Carlit
Pic de Saurat
Mt. Bialo
Port Vieux
Camillo
Soldeu
Andorra
Mt. Maner
Les Escaldas
Campcardos
Puycerda
Bellver
Seo de Urgel
Valle d'Andorra
S. Julian
S. Vincent
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would see things from an absolutely outside standpoint. And this was what I wanted.

I thought of all this as I went over the bay to Algeciras —a distance of six miles.

Here we were at last. I stepped across the gang-plank and on to the wharf, carrying my knapsack under my arm. There were the Spanish officers of the Customs examining the belongings of the Spaniards who had come over with me in the boat. I got at the end of the line to await my turn for the examining of my knapsack. As I pushed slowly towards the Customs officer I began to wonder what I would do if he asked me a question. The first problem that I was to encounter in Spain was about to present itself. How was I to answer even the smallest question? The officer towards whom I was going examined each Spaniard's belongings in a most exhaustive manner, and seemed to be asking hosts of questions. There were now only two in front of me to be examined, and I was beginning to feel awkward, when all at once an idea occurred to me. I got my passport from my pocket and opened it out to its full width and length. As I got up to the officer I held it out before him, and—well, it worked like a charm. He bowed ceremoniously, and without even looking at my knapsack, he motioned to me to go through the gate.

It was thus that I was passed into Spain.

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III.—ON A SPANISH RAILWAY JOURNEY

I

At Algeciras I took the train for Seville.

I had been told in Gibraltar that there was to be a bull-fight on the following Sunday, and that after that there might probably not be another fight for two months. I had therefore to get to Seville as quickly as possible, as it was now Thursday.

The train ran on at a moderate speed through a cactus-covered, rocky country. The beginning of my journey through Spain was on easy, luxurious lines. How I was to fare on my journey after Seville I neither knew nor cared. I had been an old tramp who had gone along many roads and got through many journeys. I was now to journey through Spain. Through the whole of my life I had been going up hill and down dale—taking the rough with the smooth. The thing in life was to keep an open mind and an easy conscience. Everything comes out well for the man who takes things with calm.

The train ran with very moderate swiftness for some miles till it came to a station. Then it stopped, and nearly everybody flocked out on to the platform. I wondered if all the people were getting out at this first station. But no—they just stood on the platform and talked to each other. And as the train still stopped there

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I ventured to get out myself. And there was the guard of the train smoking a cigarette and talking to the engine-driver. And the station-master—who was also smoking a cigarette—was talking to a passenger. In fact everybody was talking—and smoking cigarettes. I could not, of course, talk to any one myself—for I knew no Spanish—so I took refuge in one of my own cigarettes.

At first I thought that something was wrong with the engine. But this idea soon left my mind, for I could see no one doing anything but smoking and standing about. So I gave up the riddle as to why we were stopping in the station.

After about ten minutes a great bell rang in the station, and we all got aboard. But the train did not budge till the bell rang again.

Off we were going again at a more moderate speed than ever through the same cactus-covered, rocky country. And then we came to another station.

Here again we stopped for about ten minutes whilst everybody got out and lit up cigarettes and passed the time of day to each.

This time I inquired the reason from the guard of the train who was sitting gracefully on a box on the platform. He accepted the cigarette I offered him as I asked the question. But he was unable to answer me, for he knew no English.

At the next station the stop occurred again. There was as usual no reason for a stop of ten minutes. No one was doing anything.

And then gradually the mystery became clear to me. It began to perforate through my intelligence that this

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was the method of railway travelling in Spain. The Spaniards believed in giving the engine a rest after every run. It seemed to me to be a good and humane plan.

After six or seven stations had passed I fell into the humour of this deliberate method of railway travelling. It had its advantages. It was calculated to lengthen life and make smaller the risk of railway accidents. And besides it gave one a chance to get the cramp from out of one's legs by walking on the platform. True, it seemed to me that I could have tramped almost as fast to Seville as this train was carrying me, but—well, that was only a mere outside circumstance. I was now in Spain and the right thing to do was to put up with Spain and all its ways and works. Besides, the thing really suited me. This easy method of bowling along was in key with my temperament. Hurry was the curse and nuisance of the world. And from that hour I began to like the Spaniards. This calm and easy railway journey impressed me favourably.

The people on the platforms of the stations at which we stopped were very friendly and obliging to me. As I walked along the platform, a few of them always followed offering to sell me various things. I could not tell what they were saying to me, but I could feel that they were assuring me that the articles were at once very cheap and very excellent. One old woman wanted to sell me an immense melon. And she was so persistent up to the very end that I thought she meant to force it upon me as a present. At another station a young man wanted to sell me a hare. Why he thought I wanted a hare I don't know. Beggars, too, were on the platforms—cross-eyed beggars,

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lame beggars,male beggars, female beggars, beggars of all shapes and ages and sizes. And at every station there was a soldier on guard with a bayonet fixed to his rifle. He was there to prevent smuggling.

The train was now running through a mountainous, picturesque country. We were going up higher and higher all the time. And we passed through gorges and skirted around mountains and pierced through dark tunnels. And the scenery through which we passed at last became wild, and grand and desolate.

We got to a place called Ronda as the sun was settling down over the mountains. The town was high up and circling around it as far as the eye could see were lofty mountains. Here in Ronda the air was much cooler than it was in Algeciras. We were now in the province of Malaga.

The train stopped here for the day, and I found that I could not begin my journey again for Seville till nine the next morning. So at the solicitation of a guide who spoke almost perfect English I went with my knapsack and put up at a hotel near by.

This guide looked like a dried-up Italian and I can't say that I liked him. He tried to force too many things on me at once. He had to earn his living, of course, but a man may overdo the making of a nuisance of himself even in his attempt to earn a living. Although I was glad to hear English spoken, I soon began to feel sorry for myself for being compelled to listen to him speaking it. Not only did he make innumerable suggestions as to where we should go together that night, but he also asked me many questions concerning myself—

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who I was, what I was going to do, and what I was going not to do. He was quite a character, and for a while I studied him as he made rapid and comprehensive plans as to the sights I could see and the pleasures I would enjoy under his able guidance and supervision. But in the end he even dried up my patience in my capacity as a student of character. He was too much of a nuisance even to study. And I told him to go. But he would not go. He followed me around making all kinds of valuable suggestions. And he only left me after I had threatened him with personal violence.

I seemed to be the only guest in the hotel, and I felt rather lonesome. But the waiter was a good sort. He gave me his card. His name was Juan Delgado. He could not speak a word of English, but somehow or another we managed to convey ideas to each other. He was a native of Cadiz, and was a young fellow with a fine open face.

The dining-room was big, but it was badly lit and was full of shadows. I felt rather sorry that I had taken the fluent guide's advice in coming to the place. I might have done better somewhere else. As yet I had not seen the landlord. Nobody seemed to be in the place but Juan. He, I felt, was all right, but I neither liked the place nor the guide who had brought me to it.

However, things began to look a little rosier after I had a bottle of wine. And when dinner was over Juan proposed that we should go together and have a look at the town. I was glad of the proposal. Even though he could not speak a word of English I much preferred him to the guide.

The actual town of Ronda lay off from us nearly a

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mile, and the lights from it presented a curious spectacle through the darkness. They were up high and down low—as if the town was built upon a broken, uneven surface. And as Juan and I came nearer to it along the road I could hear the faint roaring of waters.

We were soon into it and we turned up a narrow street and crossed a square towards a well opened and well lit up building. It was the Casino.

From it was coming the sounds of music. It seemed a gay sort of place, and was indeed the only part of Ronda I had yet seen. The night was too dark for me to make anything out of the streets through which we passed.

We entered into the Casino through a wide bright portico and walked across a great wide, roomy hall towards where the music was coming from. There did not seem to be many people around. I had never been in such a place before. It gave out a strange effect of lightness and brilliance and distance.

A man was seated at the end of the hall playing a piano, and Juan and I went and sat near him. He was a dark looking man with a sad weary face, and he gave forth wild, strange improvisations. He was a player of talent who lived here in this town in the mountains. He was the sort of player who brings pictures to the mind of the one who listens.

After a while I tried to ask him if he knew Chopin's third ballade. He listened to me politely, but I failed utterly to make him understand. And he went on with his improvisations.

Juan and I stayed in the Casino for nearly an hour over our coffee, and then, after bowing to the pianist, we

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went out to a café cantante near by where the bolero was being danced.

The café cantante was well filled with Spaniards who were smoking and drinking. Juan and I sat down at a table and a waitress came up to us to take our orders. I ordered coffee and liqueurs for two, but Juan had to come to the rescue before she understood my order. He divined what I wanted with the intuition of a waiter.

I had never seen a bolero danced before, and I felt rather curious. The curtain of the stage had just fallen as we were entering the café, and there was a wait of about ten minutes. I filled up the time by drinking my coffee and looking around me. My trying to strike up a conversation with Juan was useless. Asking him questions as to this or that would only have been a waste of breath and time. I had to depend upon my eyes and puzzle things out for myself.

To be in a noisy place where one does not know the language gives one a feeling of intense loneliness. You feel rudderless, without an anchor—as if you were drifting helplessly. A man may speak to you casually and you will not have the slightest idea of his meaning. His remark may be rude or friendly or insulting. It is all the same to you. You are in the midst of noise and lights and movement and men and the sound of laughter and conversation, and still you might as well be alone in a desert. You are shut in by a wall. Your sense of hearing is no longer of value to you. The only thing you can depend upon is your eyes. With your eyes you must be able to divine the meanings of movements and glances and expressions. And strangely enough you will

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find that your eyes are becoming sharper—more acute. You are quicker to notice. You see more things at a glance. In a sense you are in the position of a man who has gone blind. Your sight becomes sharper even as his hearing becomes more keen and subtle. And in time you stop trying to catch the sounds of words.

The bolero. The curtain went up to the sound of quick music full of force and fire. Swaying, invigorating music. And there before me on the stage were girls poising themselves enticingly with tambourines held up high over their heads.

* * * * *

There came a sudden burst into the music and the girls crashed their tambourines down against their hands and swung themselves round. And then they made quick-gliding steps across and down the stage, swaying their bodies indescribably as they moved. As they moved and circled and swung themselves round they were crashing their tambourines. It was a wild dance to the accompaniment of wild music. Such a dance I had never seen before. A vital dance full of fire and meaning. A dance that had in it at once the languor and the sensuousness of the East and the fire and the vigour of the West. A dance expressing a curious blending of opposing temperaments. The bolero. The wonderful bolero. Here were beautiful girls of Spain giving to it a maddening, voluptuous expression. A strange, fine dance that appealed directly to the mind and senses. The girls circled and swung and swayed their bodies, and shot forth alluring glances, and waved their white, beautiful

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arms, and circled round and round, and glided to and fro and up and down. How beautiful and alluring and enchanting were these girls of Spain. These supple-moving, glorious girls who were expressing with themselves the wonder and the mystery and the subtle, magical thrall of life. Who were expressing the tenderness and the soft, glowing enchantment, and the blissful, rapturous delight of life. The bolero. How full it was of tenderness and beauty, and again how full it was of vigour and fire. Girls whirling and whirling around and swaying their hips in a magical, alluring dance. And the full invigorating music went on and on with the dance. Music at once delicious and strange and full of force and vigour. It blended in with the music and the charm of the delightful girls who were dancing. These delicious, beautiful girls of the south of Spain. These girls of golden, sunlit Andalusia. They were here dancing the bolero. That strange, maddening, rapturous dance. That dance that appealed to the mind and to the senses. That wonderful dance coming afar from the times of old. That dance so old and yet so new. The dance of centuries long gone, and still the dance of the present hour and the instant. A glowing, glorious, moving, enchanting, alluring dance. The bolero. The girls of Spain were here dancing it. Here, with their white, swaying, delicious arms. Supple, enchanting, gloriously shaped girls.

Dancing the bolero.

* * * * *

The next morning I went to look around Ronda. I

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GYPSIES

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passed down narrow streets and by old, strange houses. And I crossed a plaza and entered into a great garden. In the garden I heard the sound of loud waters. At the end of it was a great, high iron palisade. The garden was filled with semi-tropical trees and flowers and vegetation. Off from it I could see rising up the great roundness of the bull ring.

It was a soft warm morning and the air was filled with a fine surpassing clearness. Far up above the sky was strangely and gloriously blue.

I went up to the end of the garden and looked through the iron barring of the palisade. The palisade was on the edge of a precipice. This garden was on the edge of a precipice. I looked down and down, and there was a river roaring and dashing far down beneath. The Guadalevin. It was roaring and dashing and cutting its way through a narrow, wild ravine. And off from the ravine through which the Guadalevin was piercing—far off in the distance were rising great mountains. They were rising up all around in all directions as far as the eye could see. Great, tremendous, lofty, still mountains. And above them was the strange blue sky and the air that was filled with a fine surpassing clearness. These mountains here in Spain. These calm, still, distant mountains. Their silence brought out to the full the deep voice of the Guadalevin as it roared far, far down in the wild ravine. Still, distant mountains—a sky strangely blue—a wild ravine—a roaring, dashing, swift-piercing river. A wonderful picture to be seen from a garden on the edge of a precipice.

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Yonder was the part of the town wherein had lived centuries ago the Moors. I could see it here from the edge of the precipice. It was old and picturesque and worn. In the formation of these old stones and arches and strong-walled, strange-shaped houses there lived the expression of the times and the men of the East—the times and the men that had long gone. But the calm, still, distant mountains, and the strangely blue sky, and the roaring, dashing, swift-piercing Guadalevin, and the wild, strange ravine had been here then as it was here now. And the deep voice of the river had spoken through the day and through the night and through the year. It had spoken in the time of the Romans. Nay, it had spoken long before man had come and made for himself a place of habitation here in these mountains. It had spoken through the midst of silence; and it had spoken through the midst of battle-cries, and through the cries and the moans of the maimed and wounded; and it had spoken through the morning song of the muëzzin, and again through the chant of the priest. It had spoken through the cries of victory and the cries of defeat that had come from the men in the town. This Guadalevin.

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I was passing now through the town. Going through the narrow streets and by the old strange houses. The people of this town of the mountains had an old-world, easy-going air. The life of the place seemed to amble calmly along. There was no air of hurry and unquiet. Men were lounging here and there in the streets—smoking cigarettes and doing nothing with ease and grace. In the

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main they were middle-sized, well set up men, and not so dark as I thought they would be. Indeed, occasionally I saw a man with blue eyes and almost fair hair—some man who had in him the strain of blood of a far northern, fair race. They wore hats of a broad brim to protect them from the sun, and their clothes were of the nondescript, slipshod variety common to men who live in hot climates. Now and then I saw a man correctly dressed in the northern European fashion. But he did not seem to fit the place. He was a false note in the surrounding symphony of carelessness and ease. Here and there I saw a Spaniard who was as the Spaniards I had seen in pictures—a man in rough leggings and soft, loose shirt, and with a red handkerchief tied around his head.

Little children were playing about in the streets as little children play in the streets all over the world. Now and then one of them approached me and asked me for money.

Some of the women that I saw in passing along were surprisingly good looking. Evidently Spain possessed the beautiful women one heard so much of. I had been enchanted with the beauty of the girls I had seen the night before dancing the bolero.

The mantilla—the charming mantilla. Some of the women were wearing it. A coquettish, picturesque head covering.

And this was Ronda. A town in the province of Malaga. A town through which I was passing—of which I was getting a glimpse on my journey. A beautiful Spanish town in the mountains.

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II

I was now in the train going on towards Seville. The guide of the hotel—who had not impressed me favourably—had interviewed me on the platform at Ronda. He seemed to be much grieved because I had not availed myself of his services. But I bore his grief with philosophy.

Everything went well—with the customary ten-minute stops at the stations—till we got to a place called Bobadilla. Here every one got out of the train. Bobadilla was a junction, and I had to change trains to get to Seville.

Changing trains at a strange station is awkward even if one knows the language. One has to dash about here and there and ask all sorts of questions from officials and receive all sorts of answers. Even when you have got into a train that several officials agree to be the right one, there is often in your mind a lurking suspicion that you may be in the wrong one after all.

I was now on the platform at Bobadilla engaged in the awful task of trying to find my train—without knowing a word of the language. There were three trains in the station, and the problem I had to solve was which was the one that went to Seville. I tackled the Spanish railway porter, saying "Seville" to him, and accompanying the word by what I deemed to be elucidating gestures. The porter was puzzled, but he was very polite in his manner and he spoke to me at length, pointing, as he spoke, at all the three trains in succession.

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"Seville," I said to him again, "Seville." Again he pointed in succession at the three trains, leaving me as wise as I was at first. I was about to mention "Seville" to him again when it dawned upon me that it was a word utterly without magic. I looked at the porter and he looked at me, and then he went to another part of the platform.

What would I have given to have known some Spanish! This trying to find the train was dreadful.

Suddenly I noticed the porter coming towards me with the station-master. The station-master raised his hat to me and I raised my hat to him. And the parley began. He was, if possible, a more polite man than the porter, but politeness was not what I wanted. I wanted information. The station-master was giving it to me most rapidly, but I could not take it in. I did not know a word of Spanish.

But a saving angel appeared on the troubled scene in the shape of a man who knew a little English. He showed me the train I had to take for Seville. I thanked him and got in, congratulating myself. All at last had turned out well, thanks to the man who knew a little English!

A bell rang out and the train started, and I composed myself to rest secure in the feeling that all was well. But alas! all was not well.

For when we were two hours away from Bobadilla the head of a man appeared at the carriage window. The train was still going, and I at first thought that he was some variety of brigand who had come along to enliven the railway journey. He turned out, however, to

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be the ticket-collector, who was going along the platform examining the tickets while the train was in motion.

In the carriage with me was a stout, respectable-looking Spaniard with whom I had tried a little while before to enter into conversation. But my efforts at sociability had turned out to be a dismal failure through neither of us knowing a word of the other's language.

The guard came into the carriage and looked at my ticket. And then he shook his head. He gave me the ticket back and let forth a stream of volubility accompanied with innumerable gestures. I paid no attention, for the simple reason that I had no idea what it was all about. He then turned and spoke to the stout, respectable-looking Spaniard. And then he and the stout, respectable-looking Spaniard both favoured me with their conversation at one and the same time. I was bewildered. I tried to explain that I did not know what they were talking about. But they kept on—talking louder and louder.

And then like a flash it came upon me, partly through half understanding an odd word that was dropped now and then, and partly through the innumerable gestures they were both making.

I had got on the wrong train! Sure enough I was on the wrong train! I was not going to Seville at all. The man who knew a little English on the platform at Bobadilla had put me all wrong. I lifted up my voice and swore heartily at him and my own stupidity. But swearing would not mend matters. I was on the wrong train! I was going to Cordova instead of going to Seville.

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I asked the ticket-collector and the stout, respectable-looking Spaniard many questions in English, hoping against hope that they might get the drift of what I was driving at. But I might as well have asked questions of the dead. All they did in answer was to talk at me overwhelmingly in Spanish and make more gestures than ever.

At last in desperation I gave the whole thing up. I would go on to Cordova, and try and hunt up some one who knew English, and get put right for Seville! So I bowed apologetically to the ticket-collector and relapsed into quietude.

But he would not leave me. He was trying to tell me something else. What this something else was I neither knew nor cared. But he persisted. And in the end he drew out a railway map and made some marks upon it for my general edification. And after this pulled some money out of his pocket, and counted out before me thirteen pesetas—I believe—and some cèntimos. At first I thought he was about to make me a present. But I was soon undeceived. To come to the point, it turned out that he wanted me to pay my fare from Bobadilla to Cordova.

This was too much of a good thing. To get into the wrong train was bad enough, but to be made pay over again seemed intolerable. So I became dense and stupid. I failed to understand what the ticket-collector was after. He tried to drive it into my head. But it was in vain. I took shelter under cover of not knowing the language. I thought I might as well work my ignorance both ways.

Here the stout, respectable Spaniard came to my

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rescue. I could see that he was on my side by the way he spoke to the ticket collector. I suppose he thought, as all sensible people think, that railway companies, taking it all round, make too much money. But the ticket collector was a person of an obdurate and unsympathetic nature. He was like his brethren the world over. He would have me pay.

And he began to get threatening in his manner. But I soon stopped him at this, and he fell back upon volubility and elucidating gestures—which I, of course, could not understand.

I thought that I could perhaps wear him out. But no. He remained in the carriage and argued. He was a staunch servant of the railway company.

I understood well enough what he was telling me. I had got on to the line of a company different from the one from whom I had bought my ticket. However, I determined not to pay if I could avoid it.

After a while he left the carriage—I suppose to collect the tickets from the other passengers. But he came back again and argued. I had not yet, however, recovered from my denseness.

But I had to pay in the end. When we got to Cordova, he brought me before the station-master. And then it slowly sank into my head that I was not in England now. I was in Spain. In England under the circumstances I probably would not have had to pay. I could have gone back to the junction and have got into the right train for my destination without having to pay extra. It was this idea that had made me stubborn with the ticket collector. But the sage reflection came to me

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that it was impossible for me to carry England with me on my travels. So I paid the ticket collector with grace, and shook hands with him. All was well.

It turned out that a train was starting in an hour and a half from Cordova to Seville. But I would have to get another ticket for that journey also. Getting into the wrong train had cost me about twenty-seven pesetas, together with a long and tedious argument. Still, everything had happened for the best—for the company.

The train for Seville was a through one. I would not have to change anywhere, and so take the chance again of getting lost. It is needless to say that I was most thankful for this mercy.

It was late that night when I got to Seville, and I went and put up at the Hotel Inglaterra in the Plaza San Fernando.

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IV.—SEVILLE AND THE BULL-FIGHT

I

Seville is an old sunlit-town. It stands on the shining Guadalquivir. From the river arise the masts of ships.

It requires but one word of Spanish to be aware of the fact that the bull-fight is the great institution of Seville. All that you have to do is to get the fact firmly fixed in your head that "toro" means bull. Thus armed you may go and sit in the wineshops or in the cafés and feel perfectly at home. You are not out of it. You are no longer a stranger in a strange land. You know the topic of the moment, the hour, and the best slice out of the night. As you lounge easily through the narrow, winding streets of Seville—dodging the sun, Spanish-wise—you will hear at short intervals the magic word, Toro! It means a bull, but by no means does it mean an English bull. The most dangerous English bull is but as a mild and gentle lamb when compared with his Spanish brother. He would eat from your hand.

Toro simply means an animal that is as active as a tiger—that is as savage as a tiger—that is far gamer than a tiger—and that has two or three times a tiger's weight. In a ring he would make a tiger sorry that it ever existed.

To show you that bull-fighting is a thing of what might be called life interest here in Seville, I have but to

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mention the fact that the little children play at it in the streets. One of them is the matador :—having a little stick for an espada—sword. Another represents the bull—running here and there with a small wooden bull's head in its arms. The others represent the picadores and the banderilleros. They dash about and around, following as closely as they can the rules that govern the fights in the Plaza de Toros.

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I like the Sevillanos. They are a fine, free and easy people who are skilled in the art of doing nothing in a lordly way. They are the most dignified loungers in the world. And they hold the most optimistic views as to the possibilities of to-morrow. To-morrow for them is the day of days. On that day the crooked will be made straight and the rough places will be made plain. Everything will be all right. Everything will be done to-morrow. Mañana! The word as the man of Spain uses it not only means to-morrow, but it means the future that is dim and far away—the future that is not yet to be defined—a time of haze and golden possibility—a time of accomplishment and greatness yet to come. The very sound of the word carries to the full its meaning. It epitomises the philosophy of this strange, grave, half-Eastern people. These Latins with the deep voices! It is hard for the fair-haired, blue-eyed man of the North to know and to understand them. But he may easily like them. These fine, grave, courteous, self-contained people.

How the sun shines here in Seville. How clear and soft is the air. And always there are bells ringing. One

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hears them ringing through the wonderful brightness of the day. One hears them ringing through the still, warm night. Seville is an old beautiful town of bells and light and plazas and streets that wind in wonderful and curious ways. An old strange town set in a blaze of gold.

II

Above the vast bull-ring of Seville the sky stretched blue and strange and without clouds and the rays of the sun struck sharp down on the heads of the people who sat in the open glare. It was Sunday afternoon—the feast of San Pedro—and sixteen thousand men, women, and children were here, waiting to see the killing of the bulls. Through the night the great bell of the cathedral had tolled forth solemnly in honour of the feast, and the trumpeters had sounded their trumpets from the tower. And now it was the turn of the toreros to honour the day in the killing of bulls.

The outer line of the bull-ring swept round. Cutting a great sharp circle against the blue sky. The sky without clouds. It looked as if there were but two things of account. The sky and the ring. Two vast implacable things of silence. The sixteen thousand moving, shouting people seemed as nothing.

Upon myself had fallen the spell of silence. The shouts and cries and laughter of the tremendous multitude conveyed nothing that was definite to my mind. I knew no Spanish. There was no thread of language-relation between myself and these shouting thousands. I was human and they were human, and that was all.

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And for a while the scene wore for me an aspect that was strange and unreal. I might have been among the Latins of the times of old when men slew men in an arena such as this—when men fell dead and dying on sands yellow and pitiless as the sands which were stretching now before me under the fierce glare of the sun of Spain.

There rang out a great blare of trumpets, and alguaciles rode into the arena clad in old Spanish dress. And then there broke out a military march, and the toreros and their followers marched out in procession before the great multitude. They made a brave showing—the matadores with their brilliant attire and red cloths and swords, the banderilleros with gay streamers flying from their barbed darts, and the mounted picadores with their long pikes. They saluted the president, who threw the key of the toril into the arena. An alguacil got off his horse, picked it up, and rode across the arena and handed it to the torilero, the keeper of the toril.

The door of the toril was open. From it was to come the bull. Right across the arena I could see it from where I sat. An oblong, upright space of blackness, standing in sharp relief in the hard glare of the sun. There was no one in the arena now save a man who was dressed in white. He stood motionless on a low peristyle in the centre of the arena. The toreros had all gone to the barriers. The show had opened.

This man in white was the tancredo. He was unarmed and helpless. He was standing motionless, awaiting the chance of death. The sixteen thousand people—sitting in the shadow and the glare—watched him silently.

A bull slowly came out of the upright space of

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blackness and walked down the slope to the edge of the sand.

It was only a few seconds since the toril had been opened, but it seemed to me to have been a long time. In that time the shouting had died down and breathlessness had come upon the people.

There was the white figure of the man in the centre of the arena, and there, off at the edge, was the black bull, looking around. And every one was silent.

I turned my head away for an instant, and when I looked again the bull was charging across the arena. He had seen the tancredo. He was going now to gore him, to kill him. A swift black thing of destruction. It was rushing upon this motionless man in white.

It seemed to me as if the bull were rushing upon myself. I could feel the coming gore of the horns and the toss and darkness.

It was within a yard of the tancredo when it swerved and stopped dead. The man in white still stood motionless on the peristyle. The bull again approached him, this time slowly, and walked around him. Then with a toss of its head it left him, galloping off in the direction of the toril. A chulo had just entered the arena and had attracted it by the waving of his cape.

The whole of the people were now standing, shouting. The tension was broken. I was shouting and cheering myself. It was such a brave, fine thing, to stand out there—motionless—while the bull charged! Had the tancredo moved in the least he would have been gored to death before the toreros could get across the arena to the bull. He had to stand still as stone—and in this lay his

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safety, for no bull, however furious, will strike or gore a thing that does not move. If a man could have the nerve to stand motionless before a charging bull he would be safe. The bull would go off without touching him.

The chulos were now running swiftly about in the arena with their quick-waving, flying capes. The bull was galloping and rushing here and there, now after one, now after another. The men evaded the rushes with wonderful skill and precision. At times the upward sweep of the sharp horns was within an inch of one of them. The bull on a straight line could move faster than any of them. But he could not turn so quickly or so surely. Once he bounded right on the top of one of them. The man sank flat to the sand and escaped somehow between the lowered head of the bull and its forelegs. How, I don't know. The thing was done so quick that the eye could not follow it. The man rolled over and over on the sand and the bull lowered its head to charge at him again, but he was drawn away by another chulo, who waved his cloak right in front of his horns. The bull struck upwards—pierced the cloak—and the man ran, leaving it impaled. The bull had scored. By this time the man who had fallen had got out of the way. The bull was now galloping in a circle with the cape flying over its back. But a chulo ran right dead across it and plucked the cape from its horns.

The bull stopped.

At once a man went up to it and waved his cape in its face. The bull lunged forward, and as the man turned to evade the lunge he trailed his cape after him upon the sand. Herein he was unfortunate, for the bull trod on

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the trailing cape and dragged him down. At once the bull got his horns under him and tossed him into the air. But the man was hardly down on the sand again before the bull was drawn off by the waving of another cape.

I could tell by the way the chulo lay that he was hurt. He was lifted up and carried from the arena by two of his comrades. I had heard it said that bull-fighting was a cowardly affair—that it was all on the side of the men—and that the bull had no chance. But this fight, of which I was an eye-witness, proves the contrary to be true. The bull-fighters are quick, skilful, brave men who take their lives in their hands every time they go into the arena. In fact I came to the Plaza de Toros with my sympathies predisposed in favour of the bull. But an actual view of the fight and its conditions brought me on the side of my kind—the men.

The banderilleros now came into the arena armed with the banderillas—barbed darts thirty inches long. These men had to get right in front of the bull as it charged—spring to one side at the right fraction of a second—and plant their darts in the top of its neck. Being late a tenth of a second would mean for them death.

One of them approached the bull. He held a dart poised in either hand. The bull stood stiff and rigid. Then it bounded forward—but so suddenly that the banderillero had barely time to save himself by a quick move to his right. He dropped one of his darts as the bull whizzed past, and a great shout broke out over the whole of the arena. The people were applauding the bull which was now dashing here and there. But a chulo

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waved his cape in the distance and attracted it towards a banderillero who waited for it as it rushed upon him.

He planted two darts in its neck almost as its horns were touching him. The bull turned and ran on only to meet another banderillero, who also planted a dart in its neck.

There was now a great uproar. Every one was excited and shouting wildly. I turned round to look at the faces of the people. They were all intent and eager upon the fight—men, women, and children. Their eyes were following the movements of the enraged bull and the flying banderilleros. They were looking and shouting and waving their arms and making sudden gestures. There was a chaos of terrible sound.

The bull was now against the barrier off across the arena. He was standing alert and watchful with head erect. It seemed to me as if he were looking across over the sand at the shouting people. He was perhaps trying to understand, trying to fathom the meaning of it all. It might be that the consciousness of coming death had dawned upon him. He was to die out here in the glare and brightness of the tumult. He was to be killed by quick-moving things that evaded him, and melted before him, and still that were always by his side, with him, and in front of him!

Slowly he galloped forward, and the matador approached and stood, facing him. In one hand he carried his muleta—red cloth—in the other his sword. The crisis in the fight had come.

The blade of the matador's sword flashed sharply in the sun as he pointed it straight at the bull. To give the

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death-blow he had to strike down and deep through the neck to the heart. He had to strike the bull in front as it rushed upon him. Should he step to the side and strike, it would be considered unfair—a foul blow. The people would curse him and execrate him. They would call him "asesino!" They would hoot him out of the arena. He must strike the bull fair—in front! The place to strike on the neck of the bull was a spot something over an inch in width and about two and a half inches long. The matador must find it with the point of his sword as the bull thundered upon him. A half inch too far to the right or left would make the stroke worse than useless. The bull would be but the more enraged.

He waved his red cloth—and the bull came on. But the matador stepped deftly aside. There had not been a favourable opening. The time was not yet.

Again the bull came on. And again.

Now. The bull and the man came together and I saw the blade of the sword flash as lightning. Whether it had gone home or not I could not for the instant tell. The rush of the bull and the lunge of the matador and the lightning-flash of the sword seemed to the eye but as one movement.

I saw the matador walking slowly towards the barrier. The people were standing, cheering him, and he was bowing. His sword was no longer in his hand. Men were throwing down their hats to him. Women and children and every one were cheering him.

By this time the bull was in another part of the arena. It had followed the waving of a cape after the matador had struck it. I could just make out the hilt of the

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sword—showing on the top of the neck of the bull. The blow had gone home. But so quickly had the matador to move to avoid the horns of the bull—as he thrust down through its neck—that he had to let the sword go from his hand.

The end had come. The bull stopped, staggered, and fell. A crowd of toreros came up around it and a puntillero bent down and gave it the finishing stroke. And the trumpets sounded again throughout the arena. And there was a quick ringing of bells as three harnessed mules were driven into the arena and across the arena to where the bull lay—dead. The driver made fast the horns of the bull and it was dragged out amid innumerable shouts and blasts of trumpets and the bowing of the matador, who was now walking quickly around by the barrier, his reddened sword in his hand, responding to the calls and shouts and cheers.

The first act of the drama was over. And though the toreros took their lives in their hands—bravely facing death—I was sorry for the bull. I did not feel as I thought I should feel before coming to the fight—or as I had felt at the beginning of it. I admitted to myself that the toreros had to execute a difficult and most perilous task :—that the human actors in the sport—or tragedy—were in no sense cowards. But the bull was so brave and so game, and there were so many against it. Thousands against it. However brave and game it might be there was nothing for it in the end but death.

It had to reckon with invincibility.

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III

Over an hour had passed, and the fourth bull came out of the toril and into the arena. Eight bulls had to come out in all. Three had already made sport and fallen. All had died game—charging the matador.

By this time I was hoping that a bull would kill a man. My sympathies had gone over now altogether to the side of the bulls. The ingenuity of the toreros had at last become monotonous to me. They were fine, brave fellows, but they were too skilful.

Perhaps I might have felt differently if the bulls were not so game. Had they got afraid, or shirked the fight, I might not have minded so much their being killed. But to see them fight bravely, one after another, till they fell dying, made me wish that they could kill in turn. In the great reckoning of things one life has much the same value as another. And there is a fine magnetism about the thing that dies game.

The bull that was now in the arena was branded on the side with a number—89. I saw the number plainly as it dashed over close to where I was sitting. It was a small bull—but the most active and supple of them all. It bounded and leaped about like a panther.

A banderillero got in front of it to try and plant a dart in its neck. He missed—and as he turned to run the bull turned also. A chulo darted across and gave a quick, sharp fling of his cape in front of it as it followed the banderillere. But No. 89 was not to be baulked. He followed the banderillero who was flying for his life

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across the arena to the barrier. No. 89 was gaining on him at every bound.

It seemed impossible for the man to escape. The bull was going to get him!

The man was now about fifteen yards from the barrier. The horns of the bull were touching him. He was done for.

But he made a sudden spurt—reached the barrier—and was just half leaping half scaling it when the bull struck terribly with its horns, smashing and splintering the wood of the barrier just under the man's body. Bull and man came up into the air at the same time, but the bull fell back on the arena side of the barrier, whilst the man fell over on the side towards the spectators. It was the most exciting thing that had happened yet. Every one cheered.

Things went on for a time till at last more by accident than anything else a banderillero managed to plant a dart in his neck. And then the matador came out to kill him. He waved his red cloth, but No. 89 was too wily to come as he was wanted to come. He made a sudden, swift detour and charged from one side. The matador got out of his way and faced him again, but the movements of the gallant little bull were so quick and elusive that it was impossible for the matador to aim the thrust of his sword for the vital point. The bull fronted him—a hurtling, quick-moving, compact mass.

The bull lunged and the matador lunged.

In! The sword was in, but it had gone too far to the side. The matador was running off now to the barrier to get another sword. The little bull was rushing

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on its way, quicker and more ferocious than ever. The sword had not reached the vital place. It was only a goad to him.

The people were shouting maledictions upon the matador. The stroke was bad—was no good—he had no right to be a matador! The meaning of what they were shouting was plain. They were reviling the man who had taken his life in his hand.

"Malo matador! Malo matador! Malo matador!"

The meaning of the shouts was not to be mistaken.

He planted another sword in the bull. This time too much to the left. And I thought the people would go mad. "Malo! Malo!" sounded all over the arena. No. 89 was now plunging round the arena with two swords in him.

I felt sorry for both the man and the bull. And I wished that the bull could get in amongst the people—the people who were yelling "Malo!"

The trumpets now sounded and blared over the arena. This time their meaning was one of blame for the matador. The sound of the trumpets meant that it was time that the bull was killed—that the matador was neither sure nor quick.

The matador leaned against the barrier. He looked crestfallen. This was his first big bull-fight—his first real chance. And the shouting of "Malo! Malo!" meant that he would never get such a chance again. It meant that his livelihood was gone. Never again would he be allowed to fight in the ring in Seville. The yelling people were as merciless to him as they were to the bulls.

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A man, to please them, had to be strong and sure, and—above all—to have luck.

Two tame bulls were brought into the arena. They had big bells round their necks, and they were brought in so as to help to get the little bull from the arena. The fate of No. 89 was that he was to be killed outside. He had fought gallantly for his life, but there was only death for him in the end. And his victory in the arena meant ruin for the matador, who was still leaning against the barrier.

In times of stress kind comes to kind, even though circumstances are against the meeting. The enraged, wild bull at first tried to gore the tame bulls. But they paid no heed to him. They only ran round the arena with the bells round their necks—clanging. And in the end the wild bull joined with them.

At last the three of them passed from the arena out through the door of the toril.

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Now came the picadores—mounted toreros. They galloped around, armed with long pikes. As yet they had taken no part in the fighting. But when the fifth bull came out of the toril they appeared in the arena.

They were not well mounted. Their horses were old and worn, and each had a patch of canvas over one eye. This was so that it could be urged up to the bull on its blind side.

A picador galloped up to the bull and prodded him with the pike. The bull turned and—in a flash—overthrew horse and rider. The man managed to clear himself

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out of the saddle as the horse was falling. The horse was killed.

This bull killed three horses before the matador advanced upon it. He was a young, good-looking fellow, this matador. His face was brave and hard. This was his first big bull-fight also, and I was wondering how he would do. His name was José Campos (Campitos). Campitos was the name he had chosen as a torero.

He killed the bull at a stroke.

A diversion was created during the fight with the next bull. A boy of about seventeen—one of the spectators—slipped past the guards, climbed the barrier, and was in the arena. He ran over to where the bull was standing, watching, with its head lowered. He passed in between it and a picador and drew its attention.

The bull charged the boy—and caught him—and tossed him. But the boy fell on his feet, unhurt, like a cat.

Now he faced the bull, and when the bull charged him again he evaded him as skilfully as any torero. But at the next charge he was caught and tossed again. He fell in the same manner as before—unhurt!

All this happened before any one could interfere—the spectators cheering madly. Here was a future matador! Here was one who in time would become a great torero!

But when the bull was drawn off to another part of the arena two guards came over the barrier and arrested the boy. He was taken out of the ring whilst the crowd shouted out against the guards.

The eighth bull was at last near to its end and the guards were now allowing the spectators to get over the barrier

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A BANDERILLERO AT WORK

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into the arena. It was the usual custom at the end of the day's fight. I got down into the arena myself and ran around with the rest of the people whilst the bull was still charging about. It seemed to me that I might just as well take a chance as any one else. But after all there was no real danger. The bull was too far gone.

* * * * *

And here was the end of the fight—and the end of the day. The trumpets were sounding through the arena and the people were going home. Twilight was fading into darkness. The glare and the shade were now softened and made one. The vast multitude was passing away. The streets outside the bull-ring were packed with masses of slow-moving people. All talking of toros and matadores!

I walked on to the Plaza San Fernando.

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V.—VOYAGING ROUND

I

The day after the bull-fight Campitos and I had dinner together. But our conversation was, at first, rather restricted because of the fact that he knew no English and I knew no Spanish. "Bueno" and "Toro" were the only words of which we had a common knowledge. But two words between two men soon become overworked, and we had to take refuge in long silences and fraternal looks.

I had met Campitos at the Plaza de Toros just after he had killed his last bull, and the result was that we were now in the dining-room together working our two words for all they were worth—and more.

But a saviour appeared on the scene:—Arturo Danino, interpreter and past master in the art of guiding the befogged Briton. He told the torero everything I wanted to tell him about his dexterity and courage and address, and the great power he had with his sword, and of my enthusiasm generally for bull-fighting. At least I gathered that Danino must have told Campitos all this, for Campitos looked pleased and asked if it were not possible to show London the true inwardness and greatness of bull-fighting. Such a big town as London ought to have bull-fights, argued Campitos. "Lòndres! Plaza de Toros!

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Bueno!" he exclaimed emphatically. I hedged a little at this by asking Danino to tell him that the difficulty in England might possibly be about the horses. And the conversation took a somewhat safer course.

Campitos in build looked very like one of our own light-weight pugilists. He was about five feet four in height, and in weight just on to ten stone. A handy-looking, quick, effective figure of a man. He was twenty-four years old and belonged to Triana, a suburb of Seville. He looked like a pugilist with artistic leanings.

The dinner was a great success despite the fact that Campitos would drink but little wine. He had all the tenderness of the athlete's conscience as to the matter of keeping fit and in condition.

As we exchanged various ideas and gestures and compliments, I tried now and then to fit in his appearance with the recollection I had of the appearance of the stage "toreador." I tried to think of him as "Escamillo" in Bizet's Carmen—"Escamillo" surrounded with the chorus and singing with voice robustious the famous song. But I failed utterly. Campitos had nothing theatrical about him. He was simply a well-set, good-looking young man with a quick, dangerous look in the eye. A man that could move like lightning—strike—and get away. Had he been an Englishman, and a boxer, I would have backed him for all I was worth—and all I could borrow—to beat anything his weight.

When I told him of this, through Danino, he looked modest and shook his head. And then he confided to us the fact that he would not for the world fight any one with his fists. He would be nervous. He did not

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understand the fists! But the cuchillo!—knife. Ah! That was where he would shine! Give him a knife and he would tackle the best man going.

We were much observed by the Spaniards as we sauntered easily out of the dining-room:—Campitos and myself arm-in-arm, and the fluent Danino following in our wake. As we got near the door a Spanish gentleman got up from where he was sitting and bowed profoundly to Campitos. The torero bowed in return. I bowed in sympathy. The fluent Danino bowed. And then we all bowed again and passed forth.

We went along to a café in the Sierpes—the main street—where I was presented to toreros of all shapes, sizes, and conditions. And over refreshments Danino interpreted to them my boundless enthusiasm for bull-fighting. We got on famously. Whenever I thought that Danino was not interpreting me adequately I made polite sweeping gestures filled with meaning.

It was in this café that I made the acquaintance of aguardiente—a fine, refreshing drink if diluted with water.

Whilst we were here a torero came in named Eduardo Barrego (*Zocata*). All toreros have a name, other than their real name, by which they are known professionally. Zocata was a first-class banderillero, who had seen service in Madrid with the famous matador Mazzantini. He was very pleasant indeed to me, was this banderillero, and he told me that I looked very like Mazzantini. He said that I was big and broad like the famous matador, and that I had the same kind of a head. I was so flattered that I at once insisted on standing a round of drinks.

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JOSE CAMPOS (CAMPITOS)

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Whilst I suspected that the compliment was diluted with politeness, still it was only courteous for me to show appreciation. Evidently my boundless enthusiasm for the national sport had met with its due reward. Zocata was a torero who possessed to the full the native tact and courtesy.

From the café Campitos and Danino and I went to a café cantante in the Alameda. A performance was going on on a small stage—set up rather high—at the end of the café. There was no charge for admission. All that one had to do was to order drinks.

Campitos was bowed to with the utmost respect by every one in the café that could catch his eye. And I myself came in for a good deal of attention—or rather, I should say, curiosity. As a matter of fact they can tell an Englishman a mile away in Spain, and besides I was wearing a pith helmet that I had got in Gibraltar to protect my head from the sun. This helmet aroused much interest, and a Spaniard who sat at a table near us asked if he might examine it. I took it off and handed it to him. He looked at it most critically—balanced it carefully in his hand—and gave it back, saying, "Buena sombrero." My helmet had met with his approval.

The audience in the café cantante was free and easy and most democratic. There were labourers, artisans, women with babies in their arms, family parties, Spanish officers, strangers, mule drivers, and various others. All were sitting, rather closely together, drinking water or coffee or aguardiente, or the manzanilla wine. A glass of water cost ten cèntimos (nearly a penny), an aguardiente cost thirty cèntimos, coffee the same, and I don't know

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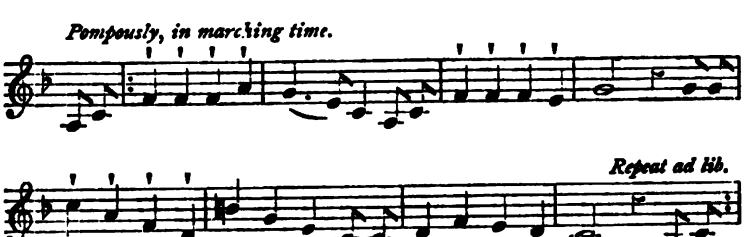
what the manzanilla cost. The camereros (waiters) moved from one place to the other—crushing in between the close-sitting audience. How they managed not to spill what they were carrying on the heads of the people was something of a mystery. One had to keep twisting and turning and wriggling about on one's chair to let them squeeze past with their trays, which they carried poised up high on the tops of their hands. But no one seemed to mind their crushing past. Every one was good-natured—easy.

On the stage there were about ten men dressed as tramps—an out-of-elbowed, ragged, curiously-hatted crowd. They were burlesquing a street band, and one of them was in the centre of the stage, conducting in a humorous, exaggerated manner. They were armed with weird and wonderful instruments, and the noise they made was still more weird and wonderful. The man who played the big drum was especially funny—a low comedian of talent.

I was trying to get it into my head what the point of the whole thing was, when suddenly they stopped their discordant playing and began to sing in unison. They sang their words to the following air:—



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Gradually it became clear to me. They were singing a topical song. This I could tell by the way the audience laughed, and by the expression of faces round me. At the end of each verse there was a short discordant interlude, in which the man with the big drum particularly distinguished himself.

I was thinking how funny the whole affair was, when all at once the people in the audience began to turn and stare at me. Campitos looked at me and laughed, and I laughed in turn, though I had not yet grasped the point of the joke. But it was soon revealed to me. I caught the words "Inglès" and "Boers" from the stage. And then Danino leaned over and told me that the comic gentlemen on the stage were telling—with humorous and wonderful additions—of the way that the Boers had beaten the English. At this I wisely laughed out more loudly than any one else—and the incident passed.

After this there followed a long interval, during which every one talked at once. And then there came the bolero. The ladies who took part in it looked enticing, but they danced with no fire. They did not get what there is to be got out of the bolero. But maybe they were tired. I had seen the dance done much better in Ronda.

What really impressed me at the café cantante was the singing of a boy named José Colorado. He sang malaguenas—old songs of Malaga. He just sat down on a chair on the stage and sang whilst a man accompanied him on the guitar. There was no attempt to get stage effect. The boy sat in a rather crouched-up position and gave out the song. And such a song! It was hundreds

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of years old and wild as the mountains of Malaga. It began with a sort of low croon, and then it burst suddenly out into an air strange and terrible. It was a song telling of blood and hatred and revenge. A song such as a hard mountain woman would sing to her son to spur him to avenge wrong and shame.

* * * * *

We were now in the Teatro-Circo Eslava listening to Boccacio. We had left the café cantante, and had come to hear something of Suppé's opera. It was of immense size, this theatre, and for a roof it had great canvas awnings, which were now shrunk up tight, leaving the audience seated practically in the open air. The night was too hot to sit in an ordinary theatre.

Boccacio! Years ago I had sung in it, and I had wanted to hear it here in Seville for the sake of old times. Here, coming from the orchestra, was the old familiar music, and there off on the stage the characters were living and passing just as they had lived and passed in the opera company to which I had belonged. There was Boccacio, there was Fiametta, there was Lambertuccio, the cooper. The only difference was that they were singing in Spanish whilst we had sung in English. But to me there was no difference. I knew the opera so well. I was again with the opera company travelling from town to town. I was again going through the ups and down and vicissitudes that so often belong to the life of the players of the stage.

The opera was over, and we were standing outside the theatre. The day had been intensely hot, and it was now pleasant and cool. Campitos had to go off over the

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Guadalquivir to Triana. And Danino and I walked with him to the entrance of the bridge crossing the river. Here we bade the torero good-night. And then I bade Danino good-night. I wanted to walk through the town alone.

II

To wander alone through a strange, foreign town at dead of night has about it the fascination that belongs to darkness and mystery and danger. You have no idea of where you are going, or what you will meet, or what will happen. Some rude stranger may suddenly appear and request you to lend him for an indefinite period all the money you chance to have in your possession. Or some still ruder stranger may knock you on the head first and borrow your wealth afterwards.

On these nocturnal explorations it is as well for you to be armed—and to be ready—and, above all, to take no heed of passing, polite people who wish to enter into conversation with you. Just go on, and look round—and be ready! And all will be well. You will find yourself awake next morning.

I had wandered in and out through narrow, dark streets till I found myself in the Plaza del Museo. I knew it by the statue of Murillo that stood up aloft in the centre of it. I could just make out the figure through the darkness. Murillo, the great painter!

I walked towards a man who was sitting on a bench. Near him a lamp was burning. He sat listless and still, almost as if the life had left him. At once I knew what was the matter with him. He was a man alone and

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penniless and without friends. He was not a beggar or he would have asked me for something as I stood looking at him. He was just a man who had gone under—who had gone down in the world. One of the outcasts of Seville.

I, myself, had sat in just such a way, listless and still, as this man was sitting now. I had sat in a great town, hungry, tired out, forlorn, and alone. And a man had come up, given me a coin, and passed on without saying a word. And I handed this man in Seville a coin and passed on across the plaza. It was but as the coin that had been given to me years before. I had recognised my debt to the stranger.

Cruel and cold fools say that if a man is hard up it is his own fault. But this is only the saying of those who are at once ignorant and cowardly. Circumstances may force the mightiest man to the gutter. If I had my way I would put all men through the mill. I would make all men pass through the fine, stern test of hunger and cold and loneliness. Then they would know something of the real meaning of life. They would know enough not to condemn.

This lonely man here at night in the plaza might have had it in him to be great, even as Murillo was great—Murillo, the painter, to whose honour a statue had been erected. Or he might have had it in him to be a great captain-in-arms—or a great administrator. Who was to know?

* * * * *

Suddenly I saw a great flame bursting up through the

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darkness. An hour had passed since I had seen the man in the plaza, and I had no idea now as to what part of Seville I was in. I had wandered aimlessly along, taking no note as to the direction in which I was going.

A fire had broken out in the town. The shine of the great flame was filling the air. I hurried along towards it, and soon I was joined by others who were hurrying along.

On we went together through the streets till at last we came out into the open of a plaza. It was the Plaza San Fernando—there were the palms! And across it we could see a house in flames.

The shadows were deep and dark in the plaza as I ran across. I fell over a seat in the scramble, but I was up quick, and in a moment I was standing with the crowd in front of the burning house. It was an inn, and it stood off in a small street which ran directly off from the plaza. Already the fire had well hold of it. It was crackling and burning and flaming away. Just over the burning house was the word "Tintores" in big letters. The word shone out steadily in the midst of the redness and the shining of the flames, and somehow attracted the eye more than did the house itself. It may have been the name of the street. The word looked so strange standing out in the flames.

It was now something after two in the morning.

The street was narrow and it concentrated the heat so that it was impossible to go up it. We just stood at the edge of the plaza and looked at the flames. I listened to the excited talk around me in the hope of hearing English spoken. I wanted to make a suggestion, or to do something,

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or to ask if there were any one in the burning inn. But I heard no word I could understand.

No one was doing anything but talking, and pointing out and shouting. There were no firemen about nor no sign of any coming. And there seemed to be no water around, and no attempt to get any. "Agua!" I exclaimed to a man who was standing close up against me. "Agua!" He looked at me and shook his head. "No agua," he said. And so there was no water and no attempt to do anything. And if there had been any wind going, all the houses extending from the street and along one side of the plaza would have been burned down.

I had never seen such a thing before. This was indeed the working out of the idea of mañana with a vengeance. Nobody seemed to care. They were only curious.

In fact, the only people who showed any sign of activity were a few watchmen who were standing just in front of the crowd. They were armed with short lances, and every now and then one of them would turn and push against the crowd with the stock of his lance. They wished to show their authority by keeping the people back. But they took no interest in the fire—as far as the putting of it out was concerned. They were merely there to keep order amongst the spectators.

A half an hour passed and then a fire bell began to ring solemnly from out of the darkness across the plaza. One could have laughed but for the fact of the danger. A fire bell ringing out after the fire had been going half an hour!

After nearly another half-hour I heard the clattering

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of the hoofs of horses. Surely it was not possible that the firemen were coming now! Yes, they were, for along came a small engine and three firemen. And now the watchmen performed wonderful deeds of energy. They dashed and jumped around, and rattled the butts of their lances on the stones, and pushed and shoved to get the crowd somewhere. Where, I don't know. It was amusing. I thought they were going to eat us. Even after we had divided to let the engine pass these watchmen performed their deeds of energy. I was disgusted. And I came near to punching one of them. He had tried to shove me through the wall of a house.

Ah! Now we were getting there! A fireman was actually coupling the hose. But the fire itself was now getting into a rather parlous condition. It had gutted the inn and was dying down of itself. If the firemen were not quick it would be out before they could do anything.

At last! The nozzle at the end of the hose was pointed at the dying flames and the tap was turned on. And every one became breathless. The crucial instant had arrived.

But nothing happened. The nozzle was simply as a gun that would not go off. There was no water after all!

But wait—hold on! There was water. A small, half-spurting stream came forth. And the crowd cheered —positively cheered—as the fireman valorously directed the feeble jet of water on to the almost dead fire.

I came away.

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III

I dropped into the Museo Provincial to look at the pictures. But to be quite frank I can never appreciate pictures in museums. There are always too many of them, and they are too close together. One kills the other. If a strong picture could be seen by itself in a great hall then it would be effective. But to see a couple of hundred pictures—however great—in a museum is a weariness and a puzzlement. You are supposed to be profoundly impressed, but really you are only tired when it is all over. One of the terrible experiences of my life was the going through the Louvre in Paris. Genius is very well, but it goes best in homœopathic doses. It is quite enough to tackle the work of one genius at a time.

I was looking round the museum when an attendant came up to me and bowed in a most polite manner. I bowed in return, and then he spoke to me at length in quick, fluent Spanish. I replied in English. Again he spoke in Spanish and again I replied in English. Then he took refuge in the French affected by guides and waiters. I knew it by its sound.

I replied again in English. And then the attendant had recourse to a more primitive method of conveying ideas. He made signs. And at last I got his meaning. He wanted to show me round and explain the pictures! He wanted to be my guide and mentor generally for the modest consideration of a couple of pesetas.

He made it clear to me that he wanted a couple of pesetas for showing me round, but he failed to make it

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quite so clear how he was going to explain the pictures. The situation had its humour. Here was I with eyes to look at the pictures, and here was a man who couldn't speak my language and who wanted to explain everything for a consideration.

I suppose he had to make his living.

IV

The barbers in Seville are genuine artists. Well might they be glorified by music and song. There is good reason for it. They are the deftest and lightest and easiest shavers I ever sat under. All you have to do is to go into a barber's shop, sit in the chair, and wait and dream. And lo! you are shaved. You suffer none of the harsh scrubbing and kneading of the face that you suffer in England. The barber gently lathers you with a cool, refreshing lather, and then there comes the gentle gliding of the razor. You can hardly feel it as it skims smoothly down and across your face. To be shaved in Seville is indeed a dream. It is a thing to be lived for. I would travel far to be shaved as I have been shaved here in this sunny town.

The barbers' shops are mainly to be found along the narrow, winding, cool Sierpes. You come from out the white glare of the Plaza San Fernando, and you turn to the left into this delightlul street that is made narrow so that the blaze of the sun cannot work to the full its will upon you. And then you turn into a still cooler and still more delightful barber's shop. And you come under the spell of an artist.

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Barber of Seville! Fine old barbero! Well might Rossini have named after you an immortal opera!

V

Agraz! Of all the drinks I have ever quaffed in a hot climate this is the most cooling and delicious. Its colour is a faint, pale, soft yellow. Like morning sunlight. It is made of the juice of grapes that are not yet fully ripened, and water that is well iced, and sugar. Its flavour is the full flavour of the natural grape. There is in it none of the hardness that comes from fermentation. Just a full, sweet, delicious, cooling flavour.

It may have been that at some time or another you have longed for a drink that had none of the hardness or tang that belongs to wine or spirits or indeed to all drinks that have fermented. It may be that you have dreamed of such a drink—that you have dreamed of some pale, sweet, golden, soft-flavoured nectar. If you have ever longed for or dreamed of such a drink you will find your longing or your dream realised to the full here in Seville.

All you have to do is to go down the Sierpes towards the Plaza de la Victoria. Go down and down till you come to the corner of a little street which runs off to the right from the Sierpes. At this corner you will see a stout, good-natured looking Spanish woman. Near her in a great bell-shaped glass you will see the crushed grapes. The juice from them is slowly dropping into a big, cool, earthenware jar. Give her fifteen cèntimos and she will

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SEVILLE. GARDEN OF PETER THE CRUEL

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dip you out from the earthenware jar a great glass of cool liquid of the colour of pale gold. Taste it and you will be glad that the day is hot—that you are living—and above all that you have come to Seville. You have never in your life tasted anything so cool and refreshing and delightful, and you will never again taste it in any other place but Seville.

A wonderful, cool, pale, sweet, golden, soft-flavoured nectar. A drink for the gods. A drink such as you have perhaps longed for in vain, or dreamed of. It is to be had here in Seville—here in this narrow, winding street. Agraz!

VI

In Seville one is struck with the fact that before all the doors and all the windows there is a barrier of strong iron bars. As you pass along through the streets at night you will get glimpses through the bars of brilliantly lit-up patios—courtyards. It is said that the Spaniard got the idea of the patio from the Moors. In the patios the people of the house sit and talk when the heat of the day has gone down. Here are palms and beautiful flowers. And often a fountain is playing in the middle of it.

It is pleasant to get a glimpse of such a place when you are going along a narrow, ill-paved street. It refreshes and cheers one up. The Sevillanos don't bother themselves much about their streets. If there is a hole in the roadway a man is supposed to know enough to walk—or feel his way—around it.

At night as you go along you will often see a young man standing outside the iron bars at a window and looking

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upwards. You mightn't believe it exactly—but, well, this young man is making love. You will see as you go past—high up above him, on the other side of the bars—his lady-love. As you pass by you must only use the corner of your eye in taking in the scene. To turn and look round would be considered intrusive, and might cause the Spanish Romeo to get excited.

VII

The Fàbrica de Tabàcos is a great building at once square and picturesque. In it are employed between four and five thousand of the women of Seville. All the day long they work, rolling and twisting and making cigars and cigarettes.

This is a workshop that was erected by builders who were possessed of a sense of the harmonious and the beautiful. Over its portal stands a statue of Columbus—the great sailor who gave dominion to Spain. The entrance to it is from the Calle de San Fernando—a broad, straight, well-kept road along which the women pass to and from their work.

The women sit working here at tables in the long, dim rooms. All sorts of women. Old and young and beautiful and plain. And women with little babies. You will see a mother rocking a cradle gently and at the same time working. Or you will see a mother hushing a child to sleep in her arms. These women must at once attend to the duties of maternity and to the necessity of earning a living.

At the end of each long, dim room one notices the soft

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"AS YOU PASS BY YOU MUST ONLY USE THE CORNER OF YOUR EYE TAKING IN THE SCENE"

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shining of light. It is from an altar upon which candles are burning, and upon which there are always fresh, beautiful flowers. The women put them there. Before these altars they genuflect as they pass, or they stop and pray before the Virgin.

Many people come to see them as they are at their work. On the day that I was there two Spanish officers called. One of them was a cavalryman—a fine, big, stalwart fellow with a frank face. In the courtyard below we exchanged bows and salutations. And then we went on through the long, dim rooms and across small, cool patios and past altars where lights were shining. As we passed the altars we raised our hats and bowed.

I had never seen so many women together before. All of them were at the same time busy at their work and talking and looking up at us as we passed. And we came at last to a patio from which the long rooms ran out in many directions. It was as if one were standing in a centre of light from which ran many long, dim roads. And these roads were all filled with the faces of women. And at the end of each of the roads could be seen a soft gleam of light—the altar. And the faces of the women were all turned towards the centre of light at the patio. From all directions. And the eye followed the faces, and followed the faces till they were lost in the dimness of the rooms and had become blent with the soft light of the altars at the end. It was as if one were looking into the faces of all the women of the world. Women who were working in a strange place of half gloom. The effect upon one standing here in the patio was strange and not to be described. You were looking upon many women, and still

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the subtle woman-atmosphere was gone. They were just workers in a strange place.

I passed from the patio and was going along one of the rooms when I noticed a beautiful dark-haired woman with blue eyes. Sometimes Spanish women have blue eyes. She was fastening up bundles of finished cigarettes, and on the table close to her was sitting a child about eighteen months old. The child was fair haired and had blue eyes. It might have been a little English child. It was her little boy, and I stopped and spoke to him—and to her. She did not understand what I was trying to say, but she smiled, and the child tried to snatch the bundle she held in her hand. I asked Danino who she might be. He shrugged his shoulders. She was—well, she was a cigarrera of Seville! Only a cigarrera. But a beautiful woman! A beautiful, dark-haired woman with blue eyes. I thought of her long after I had left the factory. It was so like life. One sees a face in passing—a face never to be seen again.

Although there were so many workers here in the great factory, the general effect was one of quiet. There was no loud noise. And when I went back again to the patio it seemed almost as if the thousands of women were working in silence. And the altar lights gave to the whole scene a dignity.

VIII

The cathedral in Seville is wonderful. It brings to the mind a sense of distance and vagueness and immenseness. And of awe and profound mystery. Surely the builders of it laid together and shaped and fashioned its

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A CIGARRERA

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great stones with the idea in their minds of the grandeur and glory of God. Surely were the workers men imbued with deep reverence for sacred and holy things. They expressed their faith in stone and aisle and nave and transept and arch. It was the expression of their conception of the Infinite—this vast cathedral. This profound place.

To stand in it made one realise to the full the genius and power and faith and imagination of the men of old. It was a work greater far than any work of art that could be fashioned by the single hand of the mightiest genius. There was no mark of egotism in this stupendous and glorious blend of craftsmanship. Individualities were lost in the triumph of attaining to the absolute expression of the idea. All the workers, from the one who designed to the one who helped to lift the stones, were filled with the same purpose—to express the wonder of God. Faith was in their lives. And only such men could do such work.

True, a place as big and as vast might be built now. But it would not have the meaning. The magic and power of a work of art lies in a far subtler thing than the most subtle drawing and blending of lines, or in the deftest skill in the placing of masses for effect. It lies in the mind and soul of the worker. The men of the present have lost the chastening power of that fine fear of the Sublime that gave the soul and the wonder to the art of old.

Standing here in the half gloom I thought of how much the men of modern times had lost. It seemed to me, in this vast place, that surely we must have gone back from the time when this cathedral grew from the

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hands of its workers. We were not as these men. We had gone back to an ignoble barbarism. We now worshipped that false, surface god—Materialism.

The men who had built this place knew of the inner meaning of the radiant and glorious symbol of religion. They knew of the art and of the mystery of life. Five hundred years! What was it in the time of the life of the world? Nothing. It had come and gone since the beginning of the building of this cathedral. It was that time since the architects had come with their plans—men whose names were now unknown. Five hundred years, and even more, had often marked the length of a backward move in the progress of man!

These thoughts were in my mind as I looked forth through the half gloom of the cathedral—forth into the vastness. A soft, cool light came from high up aloft through windows stained curiously and beautifully. It fell upon and softly illumed an altar and a picture of a guardian angel by Murillo. How beautiful was the picture! Here in the cool, half light of this grand Gothic church one might understand and feel something of the genius of the great painter. The picture of the angel was shining softly as might shine a great, strange, wonderful gem lying afar off in some deep crypt.

And now the tones of an organ swelled forth through the cathedral. Through aisle, through nave, through transept, round and round through the still, vast, rising columns, up through the far, high arches, along through many distances the tones swelled, filling the vast, strange solemnness. And there arose from a choir clear voices.

It was the celebration of Mass. And I went and knelt

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SEVILLE. PILATUS' HOUSE, THE PATIO

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reverently as others were kneeling—as one might kneel who was possessed of any soul or feeling for the wonderful and beautiful. The sonorous Latin words came forth from the choir. As I knelt I could feel their inner meaning. I was at one with the religious men of old—the men who had long gone back to dust—the men who were dead, but who had built this living, solemn, wonderful church.

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VI.—SCALING MULEY HASSAN

I WAS awakened by a loud knocking on the door. Up I got and opened it, and before me a man stood with a light. "Cuatro" (four), he said in the deep Spanish voice. And he was gone.

And then I remembered it all. It was four o'clock in the morning—as dark as pitch—and to-day was the day that I had to begin to tackle the Cerro de Mulhacen (Muley Hassan), the highest mountain in Spain—and only practicable for climbing in summer.

I had only had two hours sleep and the foolishness generally of climbing mountains struck me forcibly. To tramp along a good road was all right, but for a man to voluntarily climb a high mountain when no one was after him—well, to say the least, it was an uncalled-for exercise. And I was half determined to go back to my needed and well-earned repose. The night before I had been gazing on the sights of Granada with Bryson and Halley and the indomitable Brown.

But I was in for it. I couldn't go back. I had engaged the guide. He was to call for me this morning.

Down I went into the office and inquired for Fernando—the guide. To my joy I was informed through a sort of compound gesture that he had not yet arrived. I pretended to be much annoyed. "Cuatro!" I exclaimed

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indignantly. "Why no Fernando?" And then I retired quickly upstairs. As I went to bed again I must confess that I hoped that Fernando would forget the appointment, or work the mañana act, or get lost, or do something or another that was intelligent.

I was asleep and dreaming of the Strand when again I was knocked into wakefulness. It was broad daylight now and I opened the door with trepidation.

"Fernando!" said the man. It was the gentleman who had roused me up before.

"Why—!" I exclaimed. "Why didn't Fernando come cuatro—four o'clock as he said he'd come? No bueno!" And as the man was departing along the corridor I relapsed into pure, pithy Saxon about things in general and mountain-climbing in particular.

But at last I was prepared and standing down under the great, cool elms in front of the entrance to the Hotel Siete Suelos. Before me was the guide, Fernando—a tall, rather slight, wiry, toughened looking man with a very dark, intelligent face, and large dark eyes that had in them a curious expression. He looked wiry, but at the same time he gave one the impression of a man who only moved slowly and steadily. I had never seen the like of such a man before. He was not at all the Spanish type. On the night I had engaged him I had not paid the closest attention to his appearance. But now I looked at him with sharp interest. He was to take me to the highest peak of the Sierra Nevada and back again in three days. As he stood with his long gun slung across his back he might at first sight have suggested an American backwoodsman with a touch of Indian blood in him. But the suggestion

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would be misleading. For one thing he had not the alertness of the man of the West. And there were other points of difference too subtle to describe. However, he looked a man who was absolutely to be depended upon. He had the calmness and the eye of one who knows what he knows. He looked Eastern. He had the gravity and self-poise of the Moor. Indeed, Fernando was one of the strangest-looking men I had ever seen. He was a man I could not grasp or understand. But he was a man upon whom I could depend. He had been sent to me by Mr. Davenhill, the English consul.

Off we started with the two mules and the driver, Toma, a young fellow from a village near by. We had also with us Fernando's dog—Tula, a pointer. Food for three days, and blankets and sheepskins to lie on, and fodder were packed on the mules—strong, serviceable, quiet-looking animals. I walked between the mules whilst Fernando went in front with his dog, and Toma followed behind. We passed along the road to the left till we were out of the Alhambra Park.

We were now at the bottom of the road, and I was feeling distinctly better. I was no longer dwelling upon my foolishness in tackling the mountain. The fresh, cool, beautiful air of the morning began to inspire me. It was not such a great feat after all, I thought—only a small matter of between eleven and twelve thousand feet. There were men who would have eaten Muley Hassan, so to speak. Fellows who tackled mountains for the simple reason that they were high and difficult. And I began to think of the glorious and wonderful scenery that I would see in the course of the day. At this

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time I must confess that I was going along a fine broad road.

We turned—and there were the mountains! "Pico de Veleta," said Fernando to me, pointing to the highest. We were to sleep on the slope of the peak that night.

It was a grand-looking mountain—but it looked a good many miles away! Indeed, it seemed to me as if it might have been up in the moon. It had such a distant clearness about it. And on it were great shining spaces of snow. It was only thirty-five feet lower than Muley Hassan, which lay off behind it, and which we could not see.

At the outside of the town Fernando stopped at a little wineshop. The three of us left the mules outside and went in to get a morning reviver of aguardiente. The woman who kept the wineshop asked Fernando a lot of questions about the "Inglès"—myself. When Fernando spoke the words "Muley Hassan," it seemed to my observant eye as if she looked at me a bit strangely, and smiled ever so faintly. Here Fernando got a skin filled with wine for himself and Toma, and I got a small bottle of aguardiente.

We were outside the town now and facing on towards the distant clearness of the Picacho de Veleta. To me it looked like some far-off, starry ideal—something that wanted a lot of reaching. But I felt well enough—in the coolish morning air. It was only coolish now. Soon it would be blazing hot. And the thing was to make hay—or rather pace—before the sun got properly wakened up. In the south of Spain in the summer the sun is a force to be reckoned with.

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We had not gone a great way before Fernando stopped one of the mules alongside a big stone and signed for me to climb up on to its back. But I politely declined. In the first place I was not at all sure that I could stick on the mule's back—an animal that went by the name of Repertore. Repertore looked quiet enough, but to my eye there was, beneath his quietude of aspect, an expression of extreme pessimism and dislike of things in general. He might play all sorts of games with me once I was on his back. So I decided to trust to my own legs. Walking was good for me, and, besides, I thought I might as well show these Spaniards how well an Englishman could walk! I secretly determined not to get on a mule's back during the whole of the three days.

Without more ado Fernando got on to the back of the mule himself, and we plodded along merrily towards the far distant peak. And there was nothing worth chronicling till another half hour had passed. It was then that Toma stopped the mule he was driving and signed for me to jump up and take it easy. But again I politely declined, and Toma quickly followed the example of Fernando by getting on to the back of Turiddu—the other mule.

We must now have presented a most humorous spectacle from the Spanish point of view, for every one who passed us grinned broadly. The fact of the financier of the expedition walking whilst the guide and the driver rode, evidently seemed to them an anomaly. And I must confess that as the time passed and the sun got hotter, it seemed a bit of an anomaly to myself—an anomaly shorn of humour. Still, I had made up my mind to walk. I

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had determined to show them what an Englishman could do!

All at once the sun seemed to blaze out like a furnace. We had got into the Sierras and had entered into a dip between two far-away mountains. As near as I could make out it was these mountains that caused the heat by stopping the breeze from getting to us. The sudden jump up of the heat was one of the most curious things I had ever known. We seemed to pass into the intense heat in an instant. There may have been some other explanation for it than the one I have suggested, but at the time there was little use in requiring involved explanations from Fernando. As a matter of fact neither he nor Toma knew a word of English.

Here the scenery was beautiful, but for me its beauty was tempered too much with the heat of the sun. I seemed to be walking in the middle of a furnace.

To properly appreciate the beautiful, one must first of all feel comfortable. And I can't say I felt comfortable. I was in a rain of perspiration. And ahead of me Fernando was sitting on the mule, looking calm and cool and collected. Over his head he held an umbrella to shade himself from the rays of the sun. He had two umbrellas, one of which he had offered me some time before—but I had declined it. And it was now strongly borne upon me that his asking me to ride on the mule in the first place was no mere empty politeness. He knew how I was going to feel much better than I did. This working up a steady incline in the intense heat was too much of the nature of work to suit me. And I began to gaze on the beauty of the scenery with a jaundiced eye. I was wishing

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Fernando would again ask me to get up on the mule. But he didn't. He seemed to be going on in a sort of a comfortable half doze. I would have asked to be let get up myself, but I felt rather ashamed. It seemed rather like giving in! And I looked forward towards the Pico de Veleta. But I could not see it. It had gone. Where I neither knew nor cared.

"Fernando!" I shouted at last. And in a moment he was down off the back of Repertore, and in another moment I was up on the back of Repertore, seated comfortably on a bag of fodder with an umbrella over my head. Fernando got up on Turiddu and Toma stationed himself behind Repertore and persuaded him gently along.

I had never ridden a mule before, and I was surprised to find how easy it was. Repertore had the slow, easy motion of a sailing ship going before a fair, moderate wind.

It was now that the full glory of the beauty of the Sierra Nevada broke in upon me. I could take it in in huge draughts from the back of Repertore.

The incline of the ascent became sharper, and off in the distance behind I could see Granada lying white and shining at the foot of the mountains. On the hills to the right I could make out the green of the trees round the Alhambra.

We were just about to enter a wide gorge when Fernando dismounted from Turiddu and came towards me. He tried to tell me something, but I understood him no more than the dead. And then we stopped for a moment and he consulted with Toma. Toma then tried

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to tell me this something, but I understood him as little as I did Fernando. I thought that they were trying to tell me something interesting about the scenery. But it turned out that they were not. They were concerned in my welfare and safety, though I did not know it at the time.

As we were going along the side of the gorge it struck me that my days of active service would be suddenly cut short if Repertore were to make a slip. I would go hurtling down several hundred feet and the life would be knocked clean out of me long before I got to the bottom. And what added vividness to my thoughts concerning the matter was the fact that Repertore had taken a fancy to walking on the very, very edge of the narrow path. I tried to rein him away. But he would persist. He was sure-footed, of course, but even a mule will sometimes slip. I got nervous, and for a moment I thought the best thing I could do would be to dismount and walk. But I had had a surfeit of walking, and the path was so narrow that I hardly liked to chance jumping off. Repertore was going absolutely along the edge and I didn't like to disturb him. Here I was sitting straddle-wise on a mule, in a most dangerous place, and if it slipped I would have the weight of it on the top of me down the side of the gorge helping me in my sudden smashing into the next world! Straddle-wise! Why couldn't I turn and sit sideways out from the edge of the abyss, so that if the mule slipped I should have a strong chance of falling forward on the path whilst Repertore negotiated his downward flight alone? No sooner thought of than acted upon. I worked my leg over to my left cautiously whilst Repertore was stepping more on the edge of the path than usual.

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Indeed, at times it seemed as if half the brute's hoofs protruded out over the edge when he set them down.

When I had got myself safely round I heard Fernando say: "Bueno, Señor." He was a few yards behind me, and when I turned my head slowly to look at him he was nodding approval and sitting on his mule as I was sitting now on mine. Toma was walking between us. And then the whole thing flashed upon me. He and Toma had been trying to tell me to sit like this before we entered into the gorge. Not knowing a word of Spanish had in this instance been dangerous.

We were far away from the gorge now and the heat of the sun was roasting. It bore down through the umbrella I carried and through my pith helmet and turned my head to fire. We were up now I should think about six thousand feet, and one would have thought it would have got cooler. But such was not the case. It got hotter and hotter. I could feel the skin crackling on my face. Now and then I thought of Toma, who was going on foot behind me, urging Repertore along. In a vague way I wondered how he contrived to manage at all. But I suppose he was used to the heat and to the mountains.

I would not have got off the back of Repertore now for a king's ransom.

We stopped under the shadow of a great rock to get something to eat. Never was shade more refreshing. To recline in it was like reclining in some cool, delightful heaven. The beauty and charm of the shade of this rock far surpassed the beauty and charm of the whole of the Sierra Nevada lumped up together.

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Repertore and Turiddu began to munch industriously at the surrounding herbage. And Fernando and Toma got out the provisions whilst I reclined at full length and thought easily about nothing.

It turned out that the hotel waiter had forgotten two small trifles in the putting up of my provisions. These trifles were a corkscrew and some salt. Fernando had some salt, however, and shared with me. But I had to dig out the cork from a bottle of Rioja with a broad-bladed knife—a slow operation when one is thirsty.

After eating I had a short sleep, during which I dreamed of the cool green and the shade of the Alhambra. But the voice of Fernando calling out "Señor!" put a stop to my delightful rest and I reluctantly pulled myself together and climbed up on to the back of Repertore.

Out into the sun! We were now going at a smart pace along the trail. And it seemed to me as if the heat were dying slightly down. That we were up high I could tell by the feel of the air in breathing. The wonder to me was that it could be so hot at such a height. We must have been up close on to eight thousand feet and still the heat was trying.

At last we were well up over the snow line. The air was cooler. And we got to the Laguna de las Yezuas—a weird-looking mountain lake almost ten thousand feet up. We rested for a while here. Toma suggested to me by signs that I should go into the lake for a swim. But I would not have gone in on any account. Though a small lake, it looked weird and dark, and towards the centre of it the darkness turned to blackness. A place of great depth in the midst of an amphitheatre formed by

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mountains which were rising up all round. And on its bank was snow. Snow had lain here through thousands and thousands of years. An eternal whiteness that threw into the lake a sinister reflection that was gradually absorbed in darkness.

No, I would not have swum in this lake.

The breathing here was, for me, a little difficult. I noticed it most when I was lying down. In taking a long breath I felt now and then a sort of catch and a choke. At ten thousand feet one begins to feel the difference in the air.

At this lake it was usual for people to pass the night, and to push on the next morning for the Picacho de Veleta, which was from here only a question of about four miles away. But we had made up our minds to get on to the peak that night. And so we started.

There was no trail leading from here to the peak, and we had to follow Fernando, who went on ahead, looking out for the easiest way to ascend. He led one mule and Toma led the other. The ascent was too rugged and difficult now to ride on the mules.

And here it was that I experienced the first real, rough work of the journey. And but for the fact that the air was cool I don't know how I would have managed. I began to gasp from the exertion and from the thinness of the air. I was in every way unfitted for the climb. I was out of training. I had had but little sleep the night before—I was three stone too heavy for the kind of work—and lots of other things. And to make it more interesting still I was not wearing the right kind of shoes for climbing in the Sierras. I had on a pair of "ammunitions"—

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English Army shoes with steel corner tips on the heels. I was slipping and sliding all over the shop on these steel tips. What I ought to have been wearing were a pair of rope sandals without heels—such as Fernando and Toma were wearing. The shoes I had on were only good for tramping along roads.

Just as I was about to drop in my tracks from fatigue a wonderful idea came to me—an effective, simple idea—an idea of genius. I made a desperate spurt upwards and grabbed Repertore by the tail. I was saved! Of course, the mule might launch out and kick me across the mountains, but life isn't life if one doesn't take a chance or two. Yes, I was saved! Gallant, good old Repertore had too much work to do to think about kicking me off from him. He had at once to get himself up and drag me up the mountain. Toma was leading him on at a smart pace. I envied Toma. He was used to mountains and weighed only about ten stone. I hadn't seen mountains for a long time and—well, I was close on to fourteen stone.

I clung like a limpet to the noble Repertore, and lo and behold! we were on the top. The long day's work was over. Here we could rest and eat and sleep and be thankful. There were three or four stone enclosures that had been built up roughly to give shelter to men and mules.

For me it was a glorious moment. I had completed successfully a hard day's work through the help of a simple, luminous idea. All day long I had been doubting the soundness of my intelligence for undertaking the journey at all. But that sharp, quick idea about grabbing the mule's tail! It brought back part of the respect I had

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lost for my intellect generally. I lay and chuckled about it, and when Fernando took me over to show me the Mediterranean and what he alleged was Africa, or some other continent, I still chuckled.

As usual, there was a mist lying over the mountains. I have never in my life known it to fail yet. Before you climb a mountain you are filled with legends concerning the wonders that will be spread down before your gaze. You are told of strange, gorgeous sunsets, of sights of appalling magnificence. And you see nothing but a thin mist that effectually hides things in the distance. A mountain-climber must be a person blessed with faith and imagination. He must take things on trust, and when he gets back to the earth again he must depend upon skilful and artistic lying for the getting of fine, narrative effect.

To me the most impressive thing about mountains is the surrounding silence. And one feels so alone.

Off over there lay Muley Hassan—a massive, sullen-looking mountain. To make it and to come back here to the Picacho de Veleta, and back again to the Laguna de las Yezuas was our work for the next day.

Here I am enforced to digress in order to correct an error as to the stated height of Muley Hassan. It is said to be only a little over 11,400 ft. above the level of the sea. Such is not the case. Muley Hassan is 11,700 ft. above the level of the sea if it be an inch. Granada is 2500 ft., the Alhambra is 2700 ft. The aneroid used for these measurements had been set two days before at the level of the sea by the first officer of a P. and O. boat, and as every one knows P. and O. officers are models of

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"I GRABBED REPERTORE BY THE TAIL"

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exactitude, respectability, and truthfulness. Even their yarns have about them the salt of veracity. But let that pass. Muley Hassan is at least 11,700 ft. above the level of the sea.

My reason for labouring this point is because I fail to see why a climber should be done out of three hundred feet. Scaling mountains may be a laboured kind of joke, but this is no joke.

It was a little cold up here on the top of the mountain, but that did not bother me at all. It was otherwise, however, with Fernando and Toma. I suppose Spaniards feel cold more than do Englishmen. Fernando pottered round with a shawl wound across his shoulders. He looked like a mild, calm brigand.

Twilight was upon us by this time and Toma had started a fire under the shelter of a rock and had put on a pan, filled with snow, for the making of the coffee. He had brought up a small heap of snow from a drift near at hand and he fed the snow into the pan as it melted. And soon the water was boiling merrily, and the coffee was made.

It was then that I discovered that the provisions I had got from the hotel were hardly the best suited for the sustaining of one in the climbing of mountains. The guide's provisions were much better. At least I liked them much better. So we made an exchange. He ate mine, and I ate his.

Just as we were finishing coffee we heard a shout, and Fernando went forward and came back in a few moments with two men. They were wild-looking fellows wearing shawls, and my first hope was that they were brigands. But

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they were not. They were manzanilleros :—men who gathered manzanilla up here in the mountains—a delicious-smelling herb that seemed to me to be something like chamomile. When they had got a big enough load of it they would carry it down on their backs into Granada to sell it. One of the manzanilleros wanted to sell me some manzanilla for three pesetas.

The twilight had fallen into darkness and we were all sitting round the brightly blazing fire. There was plenty of dried wood at hand to keep it going, and I felt very comfortable as I lay on a sheepskin. Toma was singing a Spanish song. After he had finished I sang a song. And then one of the manzanilleros sang.

Voices sounded so strangely up here on the top of the mountain. It seemed as if the thinness of the air robbed them of the fulness of their quality. But what they lost that way they must have gained in carrying power. One felt that they rang out over the dark solitudes for miles and miles.

Each of us stood up in turn before the fire as we sang. And the effect was odd and strange and weird. It was especially so when Fernando sang. His song was a sort of wild chant—perhaps coming from the time of the Moors. The flickering and waving of the fire threw out behind him a long, contorting shadow and there was an expression that I could not define or in any way understand in his face.

Being here was perhaps the strangest experience of my life. The solitude and the darkness and the strange singing, and the waving, fitful fire, and the fact of not being able to exchange a word with my companions, and their

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"HIS SONG WAS A SORT OF CHANT"

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odd aspect, made altogether an impression on me which was totally unlike any I had ever received before through an adventurous, up and down life. Often one goes into strange surroundings and sees something that is but as a vivifying or clearing up of some buried and forgotten impression that one has received years before. One feels the shock of an awakenment. But here on this night in the mountains the impression I received was entirely strange and found no echo in the recollections of all my past experiences.

We turned in. I lay on sheepskins in one of the rough enclosures with a blanket over me. My revolver was under my head, ready to my hand. In life it is always well to be prepared. When you are prepared nothing happens. Everything goes smoothly. Fernando and Toma were all right, but I knew nothing of the manzanilleros.

For hours it seemed to me that I heard the voices of the Spaniards going in one of the other enclosures. One could hear things with such distinctness up here. I tried to get at the drift of what they were talking about. But that was, of course, impossible. And in the end I fell asleep. The last thing I remember was noticing how dim the stars looked overhead.

* * * * *

In the grey of the morning we were again around the fire. Toma was putting snow into the pan for the making of the coffee. Fernando was moving about, looking more like a shawled brigand than ever. And the manzanilleros were bringing up wood to keep the fire going.

Whilst breakfast was being got ready I thought I

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might as well go round by the big boulders and see how the view was getting along. I wanted to give the scenery a chance to distinguish itself. But it was still modestly shrouded behind the thin mist.

I turned my eyes to the East to watch the rising of the sun. An English-speaking, travelled, Spanish gentleman, down in Granada, had told me a marvellous tale concerning the way the sun got to work up in the mountains here. He said that it wound and wound up spirally, like a snake. Why the sun should behave in such an extraordinary manner in this part of the world puzzled me. But knocking round a lot had taught me to wear the open mind in front of a traveller's yarn. For the thing one thought to be impossible sometimes turned out to be true. So I gazed in hopes to see the sun perform. But alas! he came up in his usual calm, easy, time-honoured manner.

After breakfast Fernando looked at my "ammunitions" and decided that they were no good—"malo!"—for the long climb before us. So I made an exchange with Toma. He put on the "ammunitions" and I put on his rope shoes. He had no climbing to do. His job was to take the mules back to the Laguna de las Yezuas and wait for us till we got back there that night. I signed to Fernando if it were not possible to take Repertore along with us. I had visions of hanging on to his tail in trying moments. But Fernando made me understand that it was not possible. And the steep sheer look of the ascents and descents before us bore him out. In the distance Muley Hassan seemed to go straight up. It didn't seem possible to climb it.

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But I was feeling better now and was game for anything another man was game for. And we started after bidding adios to the manzanilleros :—Fernando, myself and Tula the pointer. We had what turned out to be fourteen hours' work before us. But I was feeling as right as a nail. I suppose the work of the day before had salted me.

We climbed and descended three mountains before we came to the foot of Muley Hassan, and after taking a breathing spell we began to work right up its face. I kept well in the steps of Fernando, and it turned out to be not such a hard mountain after all. Often this is the way with mountains that look sheer and straight from a distance.

Just at twelve o'clock we were on the summit—six hours after starting from the Picacho de Veleta. We would have a stiff journey back to the Laguna de las Yezuas—but what did that matter ? We were on the top of the highest peak of the Sierra Nevada—the highest mountain in Spain ! There were the ruins of some huts that had been built years before. Men of science had come here to take observations—had built these huts—and had gone.

I walked to the edge of an immense overhanging rock and looked out and downwards. The view was now clear. The mist had rolled away. Far, far below and out from me stretched the grand, bare, desolate roll of the Sierra Nevada. Off to my left and down through an immense distance I could see the shining of great waters.

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VII.—IN GRANADA

I

It was a great night—the night that Manuel de la Torres won five thousand pesetas in the lottery. He lived in the lower part of Granada and he had come up to the Alhambra to have a little dinner and a jollification generally. Manuel did not come alone. He brought his friends and his family to help him to celebrate the glorious event.

Sounds of revelry came from the garden of the Hotel Siete Suelos where the party were seated at dinner. And there was the lucky Manuel. Santiago Jimena, the manager of the hotel, pointed him out to me as he sat at the head of a well laden table with his devoted family and admirers:—a large, stout, jovial-looking Andalusian. He had an air of jollity, prosperity, and luck hovering about him. At the moment my eye caught him he was gazing through the bowl of a champagne glass—a champagne glass with a fizzing top. The rest of the party were doing likewise. They were about to drink a toast.

Antonio, the two Miguels, Emilio, Josè, and the rest of the tried and trusty staff of waiters were rushing valorously around:—carrying bottles, opening bottles, carrying plates and dishes, knocking into one another, rushing along with this and that and the other. Corks

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were popping, and plates and knives and forks were rattling, and shouting and laughing voices were going. Salvador, the head waiter, was standing at a side table excelling himself in the fine and noble art of opening champagne at once quickly and without losing a drop.

Ah! The supreme moment had come. The party were standing drinking the toast. They sat down and then there arose Manuel de la Torres. Manuel who had been born under a lucky star. Manuel de la Torres, the fortune-winner. He delivered a speech in the midst of a silence impressive. Antonio, the two Miguels, Emilio, Josè, and the rest of the tried and trusted waiting staff suspended their quick, bustling labour so as to listen. Salvador stopped excelling himself in the opening of the champagne. All of us listened:—Santiago and I and others who had come up to gaze upon the festival. I cannot, of course, translate Manuel's speech. But I presume that it was connected with the secret of winning fortunes.

At the end of his speech Manuel sat down and wiped his brow with his napkin in the midst of thunderous applause from every one—from onlookers, waiters, his party, and every one. And Salvador resumed business at the side table. Corks began to pop again and the tried and trusty staff got back to work.

When the dinner was over the party came from the garden into the drawing-room to continue the revelry. And here it was that Santiago introduced me to Manuel. Manuel bowed gracefully and I bowed gracefully, and we shook hands. And then he introduced me to his wife, Señora de la Torres, and to his friends and his friends'

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wives. When this ceremony was over I was given a place of honour in the corner of the drawing-room. Manuel had honoured me by making me his guest. I was the only stranger to the party that was present.

The jollity and gaiety again began, and Manuel's daughter went over to the piano to play a waltz. And then everybody but myself began to dance. As Manuel's daughter played she sang, and as the people danced they called to each other at the top of their voices. Music and dancing and shouting and gaiety. In the middle of it Manuel stopped waltzing and came over to converse with me. His manner was most jovial and pleasant. He spoke as loudly as he could so that I might hear him through the noise—and I spoke loudly. What he was talking about I don't know, but it was about something pleasant. We were both pleased.

Manuel left me, to go back and waltz with his wife, and then another gentleman came up and conversed with me after the same manner. When he retired another gentleman came to take his place, and then Manuel's wife came. It looked as if my conversational powers had been spread abroad through the drawing-room. All through the festival I was never at a loss for any one to converse with. None of them, of course, understood a word of what I said. But the Andalusians are a polite and kindly people.

After the waltzing was over, Manuel sang a song. He had a good, big, jovial-sounding voice—a voice that just fitted him. I got up to leave the drawing-room at the end of the applause, as I had begun to fear that possibly my conversational power might act as a drag upon the

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Photo. Valentine & Sons

KING CHARLES' WELL, THE ALHAMBRA

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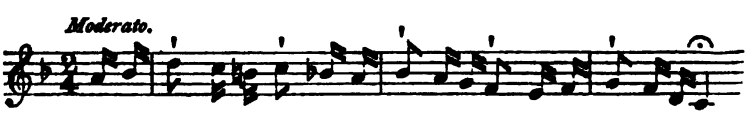
gaiety and sparkle of the occasion. But the jovial Manuel would not hear of my leaving them. I had to go back and sit down.

Salvador and a couple of the waiters came in at this point, and in a moment champagne was going around. And then the Sevillana came on. The Sevillana is a dance typical of Andalusia. Either a woman may dance it alone or with a partner.

The party sat around close to the wall of the drawing-room, so as to leave a space in the centre of the floor for the dance. And a guitar strummed out loudly, and a señorita was standing in the cleared space. In her hands were a pair of castanets with ribands flying from them. She began by waving her arms in the air and clicking the castanets to the strumming of the guitar, which was played by Manuel, who sat on a chair close by her. The tune that he was playing had a curious, abrupt lilt in it, and really consisted of a single phrase that was repeated and repeated with slight variations. I found out afterwards that no other tune was ever played for the Sevillana.



This was the phrase that Manuel repeated with slight variations upon the guitar. The dance itself depended mainly for its effect upon gracefulness of movement and posturing. It was a gliding, supple-moving dance, and at first in a way it seemed at variance with the odd abruptness of the music and the clicking of the castanets. But soon the eye and the ear got used to the combination of

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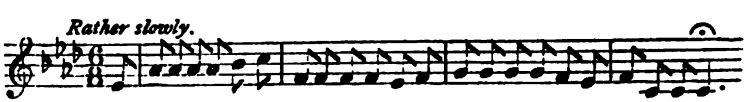
music and movements and castanets, and then it was that one saw that the abrupt lilt of the music and the click of the castanets but brought out the subtle, voluptuous points of the dance. In the Sevillana there was none of the wildness and fire of the bolero. It was just a smooth, graceful dance with a touch of the East in it. A modification perhaps of some Moorish dance of the long ago.

After the dance was over I obliged with a song. Manuel would have it so.

Twelve o'clock came and the festival was still going along gloriously. I thought, however, that it was time to retire, and I shook hands with Manuel and the rest of the company, and managed to make my departure.

II



This was the phrase that Toma sang on the day that we were coming down from the Sierras after Fernando and I had scaled Muley Hassan. What the words were he sang to it I don't know, but the air sounded melancholy and strange through the mountains.

It had the feeling in it of work accomplished—of going home. And still there was sadness in it. We had had three very hard days, and it was in accord with my mood. Toma sang it and sang it as we went down the Sierras. The music must first have been sung by men

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who had passed through the strange loneliness of the mountains. It was perhaps thousands of years old.

Toma's clear voice rang out this phrase as we went down and down. He sang it for hours. And still one felt no sense of monotony in listening to it. The music was of the time and the place and the work and the scene. It was born in the mountains—born, perhaps, long before the speech of man. An old simple phrase of music.

He sang it till darkness came on. He sang it as we entered Granada.

* * * * *

Often at nights I used to listen to the Spaniards as they sang near the fountain in the Alhambra.

There was such individuality in their voices and in their songs. There is something wonderful in a fine human voice, that has never been trained, singing a race-song. Voices that are trained invariably lose their individuality. They are made to sound as instruments sound. That is why one so rarely hears a beautiful voice on the operatic stage. One hears loud voices and sonorous voices and high voices and deep voices. But rarely beautiful voices. The individual colour of the voice is lost in the getting of an ear-piercing tone, or an over-loud tone. Nature never intended a human being to get on a stage and endeavour to over-shout the hard tones of instruments of brass. This is asking too much of the human voice. The

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singing of a thousand years ago must have been far finer than it is now.

I used to think this as I heard the Spaniards singing in the Alhambra. One was caught and thrilled by what they were singing even though one could not understand the words. Their voices sounded like voices. They were neither hard nor metallic, and still they had carrying power. They had not been spoiled by singing-masters.

Usually their songs began with a long, high note. After the long note there came a recitative, and then the voice went along with an air. Generally in the air there was a florid, running passage that reminded one of the running passages in the vocal music of Handel. The running notes were always sang staccato.

The song ended as it began—on a long note.

I tried to think what the songs could mean. They were national songs, and national songs always have a significance that no mere modern songs ever can have.

It seemed to me that the first note must have been a call to people in the distance because of its length and because it was high in the voice. The recitative must have been the story that the singer had to tell, the air was perhaps a comment upon the story or a defining of what the singer considered ought to be done. This, of course, was only conjecture, but manifestly the song had a vital and pressing reason for being brought into existence. Likely enough the leaders of the people first sang them. They were mainly on themes connected with war and fighting and revenge. Rarely were they about love. One could tell this by the emotions they brought up. Often the blood ran cold as one listened to them. In the main they were terrible songs.

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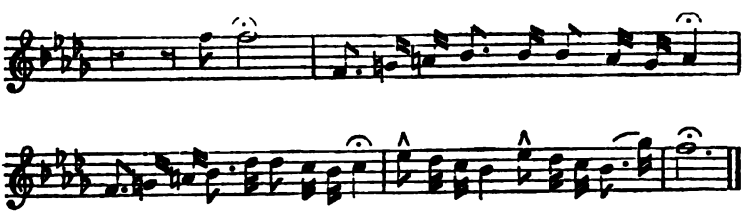
The intervals between the notes were very often different from those that are used in the diatonic scale. And besides, an effect was also got by the changing of the colour of the voice.

The Spaniards used to go on singing them up to two and three o'clock in the morning. First one man would sing, and then another would sing. They always sat and sang in a rather crouched-up position—just as the boy Josè did in Seville. Around the singers there was invariably a group of listeners.

Listening to the singers through the darkness had a strange effect upon me. It was as if I were being told a moving, strange, wonderful story not by words but by emotions and mind-pictures.



III

How cool was the shade thrown by the great elms in the park of the Alhambra. Down in the town of Granada the scorch was not to be borne. But here under the elms it was cool and refreshing and beautiful. And always there was the sound of water flowing down from the Sierras. A cool, soft sound. A murmuring sound going ever along. To sit here under the elms listening to it brought to one a sense of quietude. The soft running sound gave out an effect of stillness and silence. It

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was as if one were in a place of wonderful dreams. Here under the great elms. The air was clear and fresh and soft. It had warmth in it and still there was in it a freshness and a sense of coolness. And always there was the sound of the water that ran down from the Sierras. It was a strange, magical place. Here under the elms. One might dream and forget and dream and forget through the afternoon. A golden, wonderful place in the south of Spain.

IV

No one ever seemed to do any work but the tourists. They came from all parts of the world to see the Alhambra, and stopped as a rule but two or three days. They rose early in the morning and worked with energy through the live-long day seeing things. Some of them even followed this employment into the night.

And then they were gone. And others came. And others. There was a ceaseless round of strange people coming and going the whole time.

Feverish Americans used to arrive and express pity because Spain was not like America. The fact that the Spaniards would not toil seemed to wear heavily upon their souls. Poor Spain! How sorry they felt for her! As they spoke of her—in the short gaps of time they allowed themselves between the rushes to see this thing or that thing—pity softened as far as possible their voices.

I fear that I was often driven into saying plain things to the Americans. I used to suggest to them that their pity might well begin at home. I had not seen much of the Spaniards, but I had seen enough to know that they had

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less than nothing to learn from the rushful, pushful people of the States. The Spaniards knew how to live.

I must confess that I liked the Scotchmen who turned up. They were a grand lot of fellows. We used to have great arguments in the cool of the evening in the garden. I was always sorry when they left. There was one old chap who had been all through the interior of China. He was a quiet old man, but a great hand at an argument. He was fond of buying old manuscripts. On one occasion I went with him to an antiquity shop and witnessed an encounter between him and the dealer. The dealer was an expert in the art of bargaining. But the old Scotchman was more than an expert. He possessed genius. The first thing he did was to examine the manuscript through a miscroscope. After examining it he shook his head with sorrow and turned to go. The dealer called him back. Again he examined it. Then he raised his head and looked at the dealer reproachfully. The Scotchman was evidently casting doubt upon what was alleged to be the age of the manuscript. The expression of his eye seemed to suggest that the dealer was a person who was not above adding a year or two to the age of his wares. I sat in a chair and looked on. It was what might be called a mind-contest. The Scotchman knew no Spanish and the dealer knew no English. This was the method used :—The Scotchman would put down so much money on the counter and point to the manuscript. The dealer would bend down and examine the amount, and then he would almost fall back in a faint at the smallness of it. After he had recovered, he himself would get a much larger amount and in turn point to the manuscript. The

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Scotchman would then add a little more money to the amount he had already put down. It was a bit like poker. The only difference was that the two men worked in silence. But in the end the old Scotchman won. He executed a masterly move. He picked up the manuscript again, and this time he examined the edges of it. Then he flung it down and picked up his money. This move settled the business. The dealer let him have it for half the price asked.

There was Maurice de Waleffe, a young, handsome, easy-going Frenchman. He belonged to Paris and was on the staff of the Figaro. He was a tourist of the unique order. He hardly employed himself at all in seeing things.

I became very friendly with de Waleffe. We used to sit for hours together under the big elms and smoke cigarettes. I must bear witness to the fact that his cigarettes were the finest I ever smoked.

He could speak no English and I could speak no French, and that may have been one of the reasons why we became such firm friends. When first we met we made efforts at conversation. But the labour of it was more than either of us could bear. We were both men of calm, easy temperaments. I would have liked de Waleffe to have come on tramp with me. He stayed in Granada something over two weeks.

After the departure of de Waleffe I became very friendly with an Italian Count. He was in the habit of coming to Granada every year, and he was styled "The Prince," because of his courtly manners. He was the politest man I ever met in my life. He could speak

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some English, and when I told him that I was going to tramp up through the country he asked permission to come with me. Could politeness go further ?

Now and then tourists arrived who put on airs. And to tell the truth they were not English. My opinion is that the English tourist is rather maligned. He neither puts on airs nor is he rude. He is only awkward.

The Count and a Polish engineer and I used to go down together to a place near the Plaza de Bibarrambla and imbibe cool, refreshing lager beer. It was kept on draught by a German and was a very good thing to take of a hot day. After imbibing, the three of us would amble easily down to the Puerto Real—keeping carefully on the shady side of the Calle de los Reyes Catòlicos. Then we would amble easily back to get another refresher. It was good lager—glorious, cool lager.

Occasionally female tourists used to appear in the weird get-ups that one sees in the French comic papers. I had often seen these caricatures and had always felt that there could not possibly be any ground for their existence. But I am bound to say that ladies now and then appeared in Granada whose make-up injured the eye, so to speak. Why they appeared thus I am unable to tell. But they appeared. It was as if they had walked out of a comic paper.

Taken by and large the tourists were honest, hard-working people. The way they rushed and bustled round won one's respect. Often I wondered how they managed to escape sunstroke. But I suppose that nature in its wisdom had given them thick tops to their heads.

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V

A word as to the courier.

The courier who accompanies the verdant British tourist through Spain is usually a most interesting person. He knows much more than is good for the person whom —to put it with mildness—he is leading by the hand. I have had many opportunities of studying him as he has passed in and out of Granada with his quarry. He hails from Gibraltar, where he has hooked his guileless tourist fish. He is a person of presence and understanding and has villainy written all over him. The Spaniards call him "Escorpion de la Roca" (a rock scorpion).

It is, of course, needless to say that he is violently and aggressively and most patriotically English. He not only raises his hat, but he kneels, so to speak, when he hears the National Anthem. And I can't say that I wonder at it. The English are really his friends. They trust him with their pocket-books, which is saying a lot.

As to the genesis of the breed of the courier—well, my eyes are not sharp enough to fairly detect it. But I should say it was complex. It seems to me to be a blend of Jewish and Spanish, with a colouring dash of Moor. His English is strange-sounding and misleading. How his Spanish is I don't know.

His knowledge is all-embracing, and his honesty and probity are as sound and as solid as the Rock from whence he hails. And he is a great linguist. The tongues and the dialects of the earth are to him as simple, open books.

These facts he will tell you of in his fluent, misleading

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English. You will probably have only a faint idea of the other things he discourses upon. You will most likely be puzzled. But you will have no doubt at all as to his honesty and omniscience. He will manage to impress it vividly upon you. He is a person who realises the value of iteration.

One of these couriers did me out of two duros (ten pesetas). I can't go into all the details of the transaction, but sufficient is it to say that I was done—done brown. I thought that I was sharp and that I knew the ropes, but, alas! when I thought thus I had no idea that the time would come to pass when I should have to measure wits with a rock scorpion—a courier from Gibraltar. And not only did this courier do me out of two duros, but he also palmed off a bad duro on me as a climax. But I wish him well. He was one of the pleasantest and most interesting scoundrels I have ever had the good fortune to meet.

On the night that he did me out of the two duros we drank together and vowed eternal friendship for each other. He told me how proud and glad he was to meet me—a man who had been, as I had been, all over the world! I must digress slightly here, and say that as a kind of balance against the oft-recurring recital of his deeds of honesty and omniscience I had been forced to tell him of some stirring deeds of my own in various parts of the planet. It doesn't do to allow a narrator of strong talent to have things too much his own way.

His English was a trifle less unique than the English of couriers in general, and we were, therefore, able to understand each other fairly well. He told me that if I

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only knew French and Spanish I would have made a first-class courier myself. This may not have been a compliment of the most ethical order, but, coming as it did from such an acute and observant quarter, I must say that I value it as endorsement of my keenness and sharpness generally. I am sure that he meant it at the time.

That night was one of the pleasantest and most jovial nights of my life.

It was not till the day but one after he had departed—with his tourist quarry—that I found out how he had done me. But I don't regret it. He was an interesting man.

But let us come with more directness to the point I am trying to bring out. The only good reason that an Englishman should take a courier through Spain with him is because the courier has to live. A man who is not intelligent enough to ask how much he is going to be charged at a hotel ought to do one of two things—either he ought not to travel at all, or he ought to travel with his parents. Such a person is unfit to face this rude, bleak world alone. His going around without a proper guardian only makes it harder for more intelligent people who have less cash. He raises the price of things.

A courier is simply a man who tells lies in bad English. To the student of human nature he is, of course, invaluable—a mine. He is worth whatever price he may think fit—or be able—to exact. But he is no use whatsoever to the verdant, trustful British tourist whom he is leading blindfold, so to speak, through Spain. Besides robbing him at every hand's turn his information concerning things has at best but an individual value. I mean individual in the sense that it is original with the courier—his

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GYPSY OF GRANADA

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very own. He is a man with a strong, confident imagination.

And there is another point. His quarry—or, rather, his tourist—can't call his soul his own. A person who takes a courier to lead him by the hand is naturally a person not over-endowed with strength of head or character. And the result is that he must do what the courier says. He must go here or there or see this or that according to orders. He has sold his soul through laziness.

I remember one day talking to a tourist outside the hotel, and just as we were in the middle of the conversation his courier came up and positively ordered him to come away. Something had to be seen! The tourist was in no violent hurry to see this thing—whatever it was—but he went off like a lamb.

It may be, of course, that there are couriers who at once know all places, know all languages, and at the same time are truthful and conscientious. But I should think that they were the rarest of rare birds. I should think that they don't often adorn this incomplete world with their presence.

But even if they existed it would be much better for a man to blunder along of himself. The only way to get to know anything about a people or a country is to try your level best to understand them or it yourself.

I go at some length into this question, not from any particular sympathy with the verdant tourist. The law of life has it that a pigeon must be plucked. But it is as well to clear the air. It is as well to explain to travellers generally what sort of a man the courier usually is—at least in Spain—and what are his aims.

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As a matter of fact, there doesn't seem to be any exact or reliable information about anything in Spain. It is the great charm of the country. And the courier but adds to this charm.

But he is a costly luxury.

VI

The Spanish policeman is a mild, inoffensive person who carries a revolver and a long sword. He is paid at the rate of one and twopence a day—English money—and how he manages at once to uphold the majesty of the law and to keep his family is a problem. But I suppose he solves it somehow. Things are cheaper in Spain than they appear to the foreigner.

His uniform is a shabby cross between an English postman's uniform and that of a Spanish officer. And he has to provide it out of his one and twopence a day.

He goes slowly about doing nothing—doing it in a modest, unobtrusive way. This I have never seen in a policeman before. And here I must say that different policemen have different ways of doing nothing. An English policeman does it with dignity. An American policeman does it with truculence. A French policeman does it autocratically. But a Spanish policeman does it with modesty.

I like him. He can't tell me much about anything, but still I like him. There is a live-and-let-live air about him—an air that I have never before seen hovering about a Government official.

He is a quick shifter of aguardiente.

* * * * *

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The Spanish beggar is a different person altogether from the Spanish policeman. He has boldness and craft and insistence—and, indeed, every quality that goes for the making of success in the world. Why such a gifted person should be a beggar I don't know. It is impossible to know everything.

He gets in front of you, he comes from behind, he comes from the side—an untiring, vigilant person, demanding alms. In the beginning he calls you "Señor" in a caressing voice. Should you pass him by, however, the "Señor" becomes packed to the full with scorn—something like the "Thank you!" of the London cabman when you have given him his just and proper fare. Should you give him alms he often enough asks for more.

Perhaps he is at his worst when he is young. When he is old you have some slight chance of getting away from him by walking fast. But when he is young, and the weather is hot, you must either give him something or suffer. He will follow you for a mile or more if necessary, deluging you at every step with interesting allusions to his poverty and to your own grandeur of appearance and natural goodness of heart and benevolence. You may not know a word of Spanish, but you will know that he is telling you that you are the finest thing that ever happened, and that he is very, very hungry. You can feel that he is telling you this. He has the art of making himself understood. He does not look hungry, but he has a hungry voice. In fact, the beggars of Spain look remarkably well-conditioned. They are, of course, not dressed well. Often they are in rags. But then they are artists.

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One hot day I was coming up the steep road that leads to the Alhambra. It was the sort of a hot day that is really hot. No surface heat such as one gets in London, but a heat that got right into your blood. I was wishing that I was somewhere else than in the South of Spain.

Suddenly, as I was toiling wearily along, two beggars of the youthful variety came out of the shade of some trees and tackled me. I groaned. By this time I had been tackled by so many beggars that I fear I had become hardened to the expression of their woes. I had become uncharitable.

"Cinco cèntimos, señor!" they demanded, as they got one on either side of me.

I turned and swore at them.

But it was of no use. They smiled and told me how good-looking I was. "Bonito señor—buena señor. Cinco cèntimos, señor; cinco cèntimos!"

"Anda!" (go) I shouted.

"Mucha hambre—mucha hambre, señor." (Very hungry—very hungry, sir.)

I knew well what they were saying, for I had heard it so often. I knew it by heart. And I would have given them ten cèntimos each to go, but I knew from experience that this would not have been effective—at least not in this case. They would have still followed me on general principles.

They kept by me as I toiled in the heat up the steep road. Their voices and themselves surrounded and oppressed me. I had no idea what to do. Giving them money would not have absolved me from their company. I was in for it.

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Finally, I suppose it must have dawned upon them that I would give them nothing, for their remarks began to take a scornful and abusive turn. "Malo hombre!" (bad man). "Malo!" they began to shout.

And then they dropped suddenly behind.

I began to breathe with more ease and freedom. I had beaten them after all! But just as I was congratulating myself a stone whizzed past my ear. I turned, and there they were, something over fifty yards away. One of them was in the act of aiming a stone at me, whilst the other was gathering some up from the road.

I dodged and ran towards them. But they slipped in amidst the trees on the side of the road. I might as well have tried to chase the wind. So I turned and made up to the Alhambra as fast as I could. An idea had occurred to me.

All the while the stones kept flying past me, but I took no notice. And in time it ceased altogether. It would not do for them to follow me too far up.

At last—at last I was talking with my friend, old José Lara, a Spanish policeman. With many gestures, and a word or two of vigorous, bad Spanish, I made plain to him what had happened.

He was most indignant. And as I had taken the precaution of giving him a peseta in advance his indignation soon mounted up to working pitch. I suggested pursuit and he agreed, and we started to run down the road together.

Ah! They were there!—just slipping out of the trees nearly a hundred yards in front of us. I shouted out, and José Lara valorously tried to draw his sword. It was this confounded drawing of the sword that undid

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us, for it enabled the beggars to improve the start they already had. Poor old José tripped and fell as he was trying to get it out of the scabbard, and I had to stop and pick him up.

He was up now, running alongside me and waving his sword. He was hardly the most effective ally I could have had, but he represented the law. He clothed my pursuit of the beggars with dignity and legality. I represented force, he represented law, but the beggars represented swiftness!

And the beggars won.

When they were altogether out of sight we stopped to take breath. And then Lara bethought him of his whistle. He got it from his pocket and blew, and in a moment there appeared three more policemen, to whom Lara recounted the story of the happening. They were becomingly indignant. And then Lara sheathed his sword. The incident was closed. I gave him another peseta and, taking his arm, I came back with him up the road.

* * * * *

After all, everything has its uses, everything performs some duty. Philosophy has it so, and I am driven to the conclusion that philosophy is right. The beggars of Granada perform the duty of keeping the town awake.

It is the easiest and most slumberous town I was ever in. A grand place of rest. Nothing ever goes on, no one ever does anything. And, like the policemen, the people of Granada do nothing in an honest, modest, unobtrusive manner. At a glance you can tell that they are doing nothing and that they never intend to do anything.

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ALHAMBRA. COURT OF LIONS

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Granada is a town that sleeps under the shadow of great mountains. Visitors come from the outside world. But they are manifestly out of place. They are foreign, bustling, disturbing, human atoms.

But for the beggars Granada would sleep and sleep till it died. They embody insistence, persistence, and tireless, indomitable energy.

VII

To me the most impressive thing in the cathedral of Granada is the tomb wherein lie Ferdinand and Isabella, the Reyes Catòlicos (Catholic Kings). The cathedral itself is in no way to be compared with the cathedral in Seville—that is, from the standpoint of sublimity of effect. I can't imagine a more wonderful place than the Seville Cathedral. It is as if it were the work of a power more than human.

The cathedral of Granada is only a big, ornate, curiously built church. I was in no way impressed or thrilled by it. True, it has some magnificent altar-pieces done by an Italian artist. But a church cannot be judged as a church by any individual art work that it possesses, however great. It must be judged by the measure it gives of the effect it was intended to give—that of sublimity and awe. And the cathedral of Granada has no more the effect of a place of worship than has St. Paul's Cathedral in London. In the cathedral of Seville the impulse to kneel might well come upon one. But in the cathedral of Granada one simply feels curious—just as one might feel in some museum filled with unique treasures and objects of history and art. One walks about. One looks here and there.

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There is no vague, surrounding effect of mystery and solemnity.

One is not in a place of God.

But the tomb wherein lie Ferdinand and Isabella holds the imagination. The simple, dark coffins that have lain through centuries in darkness hold the dust of the figures that stood forth in the full blaze of the greatness of Spain.

Isabella, who sent forth the great sailor, Columbus, to find dominion and treasure for Spain, lies here—dust. A woman was the dominant figure when Spain awoke to the full stroke of her power and drove forth the over-civilised Moor.

Civilisation is a wonderful thing, but it is well for a nation not to fall too much beneath its spell. Brutality is a sign of health in the life of a nation. Let us be frank and straight. To live a nation must be hard and brutal. Barbarism is but being consistent with man's terrible beginnings. Man has evolved out of obscure, horrible struggling. He is still a fighter, a brute of effective, wonderful organisation. And he loses his strength when he clothes himself with the subtle hypocrisy of over-civilisation. He becomes prey.

And so it was that the Moors became the prey of the Spaniards—a fine, barbarous people. The Moors were far more intelligent than the Spaniards, but as a race they had lost their hardness. They had given themselves over to the expression of the senses. To see this one needs but to look at the Alhambra :—that wonderful expression of decadent Mohammedanism.

And it came to pass that Boabdil, the Moorish King,

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gave over the keys of the Alhambra to Ferdinand and Isabella, whose dust now lies in this tomb. All are gone —Boabdil, Ferdinand, Isabella. Gone are the hosts of Spain and the hosts of the Moors.

A priest showed to me the vestments that Cardinal Mendoza had worn when he celebrated Mass in the Alhambra after the conquest of Granada. Strange vestments, golden-wove, that covered the shoulders of a fighting priest as he offered up solemn thanks for victory. The priests of Allah, of the Crescent, had gone, and in their place had come the priests of God, of the Cross! And now all were gone—were dust:—Catholic Kings, Boabdil, Christian and Moorish hosts, priests of Crescent and Cross.

* * * * *

The Alhambra is the expression of a race near to death —of a race that had lost its greatness—its men. There is no vigour in it. It has grace and beauty and subtlety and charm—but no power. One can well understand that the race that built the cathedral in Seville would have the power to crush the race that built the Alhambra. Architecture is the key to the character of a nation. It is the ultimate expression of the men of the time.

The Alhambra is the remains of a great harem—a palace of pleasure built on a hill. A magical and marvellous embodiment of sensuousness and the enslavement of man to his senses. A place of fountains, and gardens, and courts, and slender, effeminate, marble pillars. A monument of voluptuousness, subtle, and strange, and deadly. And a place of cruelty. Stories

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are told of terrible happenings. In one of the courts a family was extirpated.

Well might Boabdil stand at San Sebastian and give up the keys of Granada to Ferdinand and Isabella. The hour had come for him to pass out from his possessions. He had failed to keep with the sword what was won by the sword. He had been ousted by the divine right of force. And he passed on over the mountains to the sea and for ever out of Spain. He left behind him the Alhambra, the sign of the doom of his race—a wonderful, curious, strangely-wrought, beautiful sign. Boabdil went forth into darkness.

Cuesta de los Muertos (the Hill of the Dead). When the moon shines brightly along down the slope of this hill, it illumines three massive square towers. They were built in the beginning by the Moors when the Moors were men—when they were in their strength. They are the places wherein lived the Mohammedan soldiers of the Guard. From them was kept the watch through the day, and through the night, and through the years. From them rang the challenging voices of Arab sentinels. Three massive square towers. From them at sunrise rang out the clear voices of the East in prayer. Three towers. They tell of the time when the Moors were austere and strong—when they would have hurled the Spaniard back from Granada. These towers tell of the time when the Moors fasted and prayed and were heroes. They guarded the palace—the Alhambra that in the end became the sign of enervation and death—that sheltered a Boabdil.

These noble and beautiful towers that stand by the

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Hill of the Dead. For hours I have watched them as they stood forth clearly in the light of the moon. I have stood in their shadows and listened for the clank of the steps of the sentries—sentries that were gone seven hundred years. And it seemed to me as if I heard the ghost-sounds of the steps of soldiers as they were moving on guard. It seemed as if the towers were filled with the ghosts of fighting-men—as if sounds came of the steps and the moving of soldiers, and of the clank of arms—sounds living in the strange, deep silence and darkness of the past.

I care nothing for the curious and wonderful palace of the Alhambra, with its pillars and courts and gardens. But I have reverence for these three Moorish towers.

In them lived men.

VIII

The gipsies have lived here in caves in the side of the mountain through hundreds of years. Before that they lived in an unsettled way in the mountains that surround Granada. Where they came from in the first place no one knows. They were here in the time of the Moors. They were here in the time of the Romans. Their ancestors saw the gleam from the swords of Roman soldiers as they marched along in the distance of the valley beneath them.

The Albiacin. This is the name of the quarter. It joins Granada, but it is as distinct from Granada as the gipsies are from the Spaniards themselves. The few Spaniards that are here look strange and foreign and out of place.

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It has one rough, tortuous street that follows by the mountain face. On one side of this street are the caves where the gipsies live—on the other side the great valley stretches out and down. The sierras tower up behind the Albiacin, and again they tower up in the distance across the stretch of the valley. It is a strange place.

There are crosses here and there in the rough, tortuous street, but they belong no more to the Albiacin than do the Spaniards. They are out of harmony. The religion of the gipsy goes back far beyond the religion of the Christian or even the religion of the Jew.

The gipsies are an old people. Their impulse of worship belongs to a time that is dead tens of thousands of years—a time primal and old as the sierras themselves. It may be that the gipsies are unconscious of the fact that this impulse is an impulse of worship. It may be that they have forgotten the far-distant traditions of their race. But this impulse of worship lives in their blood. It finds expression in a strange dance.

The gipsies beg, but they beg with an air. They have grace and self-poise and the subtle, mysterious charm that is called manner—that only exists in people that for a long time have come in an unbroken line from the same people—that fine, subtle charm that surrounds the personality as an atmosphere—manner. The gipsies possess it. It shows in their carriage, in their eyes, in their gestures, in their dress. The little half-naked children have it as they come up in the bright sun to ask for coppers.

The women tell fortunes. They look into the mystery of the lines of the hand. Can it be that these strange

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people still retain a glimmering of some tremendous knowledge they possessed in the far past concerning the stars and their influence? The strange, shining star worlds. Were their secrets once known to the gipsies?

They may have lost their history, they may have forgotten their traditions, they may have no conscious sense of their old Phallic worship. But they are here—a remnant of some ancient, wonderful race.

* * * * *

I was in the cave and Lola was dancing a dance of strange rhythm. The light from a lamp above fell upon her face, which was aflame with a strange expression. The rest of the cave was in darkness. I could hardly make out the forms of those who sat round watching the dance.

The light was full upon the gipsy as she moved in the dance. Her great, dark eyes shone as fire shines in darkness. Her body swayed and undulated to music that had lived since the beginning of her race.

She was a priestess now, and performing a sacred rite —a rite coming from a time when was worshipped the tremendous mystery of life itself. She was a reincarnation of some Lola that had lived thousands upon thousands of years before. She knew not that she was a priestess, but the spell of the old, long gone time had come to life in her blood.

There were times when she danced softly, and there were times when her dancing was wild and expressed the vigour and the magic and the joy of life. And times when there was devilry in it—strange, sinister devilry, expressing hate and destruction.

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Around the scene was darkness. It was as if darkness enclosed a flame and the flame enclosed Lola. As if she were the priestess Lola that had been summoned by the might of some terrible spell from a time long dead and forgotten—summoned in a halo of flame to perform in this cave a Phallic rite.

Her arms waved strangely. Her body moved to the weird music. And I began to think of this dance as it was danced in the past—under the full light of the sun. What manner of people were they that witnessed it in the time gone by tens of thousands of years? Were the secrets of life and of the worlds laid open before them? Were they a race past us as angels would be past men? Where had they gone? What had become of them? Was all that was left of their memory but a single rite or their religion?—this dance that expressed the beauty and mystery of the body.

It had now become wonderful, maddening, here in the dark cave. It fired the blood—and still it had in it an influence of fear. It caught and lifted one, and still left one trembling as though confronted in the darkness with something unknown.

It seemed to me as if Lola had been dancing through a long, long time. For me the moment contained years.

It is not years that make up life. It is the vital, supreme moment that comes through the lapse of time as the oasis comes in the desert. One may live through years in a moment. And through such a moment I passed as I watched Lola dance. I had no thought or heed for those who were watching with me. They were but strangers whom I had met in passing, and who had come here with

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VIEW FROM THE ALHAMBRA

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me to the cave. They would be gone. I would let them pass from my mind.

A great rafter stretched across the roof of the cave. From it pended the lamp that bore the flame that fell upon Lola. The body of the lamp was of brass, and formed into the shape of a serpent lying in a circle. It swayed gently as Lola danced beneath it.

And now the music grew softer and Lola began to move slowly backwards as she danced. And the music grew softer and softer still, and Lola sank to the ground. Faintness had come upon her.

And so was ended this strange dance—this rite of the religion of an old people—a people older than the oldest of the world's histories—a people older even than the oldest of the world's traditions. They lived here in caves in the mountains, a strange remnant of some mysterious people who had once, long, long ago, been of power and of might in the world—a people who had outlived some civilisation, magical, wonderful, and profound.

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VIII.—HOW I WAS SENT TO GAOL

I

How the row started I haven't the faintest idea. We were all together in a wine-shop in the Calle de los Reyes Catòlicos—a street in Granada. It was after twelve o'clock at night, and Rafael was imparting some interesting information to me at the top of his voice. What the information was about I don't know. But I was listening with the gravest attention and nodding acquiescence whenever I felt the right instant had arrived. One learns to be polite in Spain.

All seemed to be going well, when suddenly I noticed Rafael's eye wandering. He stopped talking and turned quickly round to a Spaniard, who was not of our party. They glared at each other, and then Rafael made a plunge forward and caught the man by the throat.

And that is all I know about the row. It may have been an old feud, or it may have been that the man attacked had made some impolite remark bearing upon the information that Rafael was imparting with so much vigour to myself, or it may have been anything. Whatever it was remains as much a mystery to me as what Rafael was talking about. All that I know is that the next instant I found myself at one end of the wine-shop with Rafael, Castro, Joaquin, and somebody else. In

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front of us was the man who had been attacked, and his friends.

I hate bar-room rows. Being in one is more dangerous than being in a firing-line. Men are apt to be killed before they know where they are. Men advancing on a position have some chance for their skins, but this hand-to-hand business is always ugly.

I got between the two parties and tried to explain. But as I knew, practically, no Spanish, my explaining powers were handicapped.

"Malo, Inglès!" shouted a man to me—the man who had been attacked by Rafael. I may as well say that when the first hostile move had been made I had turned quickly round and slipped my revolver from my breast-pocket down to my right-hand jacket-pocket. Thus, whilst I was talking peace I had my finger full on the trigger of my revolver, and was pointing it through the cloth of my coat in the direction of the man who had shouted "Malo!" It is always well for the peacemaker to be fully armed and prepared. If he is not, he is more than apt to get hurt. Peacemakers are unpopular.

During all this the din on both sides was deafening. I thought Rafael would burst. He shouted and gesticulated so furiously. I had to get on one side so as to dodge the sweep of his arm. Indeed, it was a bit hard to keep one's head through it all. I had no idea that Spaniards could work so hard. They shook their fists in each other's faces and waved their arms and hands, and roared out maledictions, and made all sorts of excited, compound gestures.

It was then that I got with my back to the wall, and

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began to study the scene. And one of the quick conclusions I came to was that the Spaniards were a people possessed to the full of concealed energy.

The only calm person in the wine-shop was the stout, old señora who kept it. She sat behind the counter, close to a big, black wine-skin. Her face wore an expression of peace and rest. I suppose she had seen rows before.

And now the gallant Rafael rushed to the door of the wine-shop—flung it wide open—waved his arms over his head—and ran out. His back was to us as he waved his arms above his head, and the figure he cut gave to the scene a needed touch of comedy.

Everybody ran out after him. And I ran out, too. And then I gathered Rafael's meaning. He meant that they should go out into the street and fight it out. To tell the truth I was rather glad of this, for I was curious to see how the Spaniards conducted a fight. As yet no blows had been struck, and I was beginning to think that they did not mean business.

In the street there was a sort of a pause and then somebody whipped out a knife and flung it—I think, at Rafael. But it nearly hit me. It fell clattering on the stones behind me, after whizzing past my shoulder.

This was too interesting, and I jerked the revolver from my jacket-pocket and fired just in front of a man who was coming towards me. Being knifed in an affair that wasn't my affair didn't at all take my fancy.

The revolver made a report like a cannon, and had the effect I knew it would have. Everybody scattered, leaving

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"THE REVOLVER MADE A REPORT LIKE A CANNON"

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me the street all to myself. A revolver in the darkness is a quantity very much unknown.

I had aimed the shot down just in front of the man's feet. I had no intention of hitting him. What I wanted was peace. When the knife was flung I had at once seen that if the row were not stopped someone would be killed —perhaps myself. And I had stopped it in the only way I could stop it—by putting the fear of God into them all. Had I threatened with the revolver it would have been fatal. The only way was to make them feel that business was meant—to let the actual music come suddenly on their ears.

Peace now reigned in the Calle de los Reyes Catòlicos.

All were gone:—Rafael, Castro, Joaquin, the ally whose name I didn't know, and their opponents. Both friend and foe had come to the conclusion that my room was better than my company.

I put my revolver back into my pocket and turned to walk away. At almost the first step my foot struck against the knife that had been flung. I picked it up and looked at it. It was an ugly-looking affair, and would have done for any man it struck fairly.

Hardly had I gone fifty yards when I saw the flashing of lanterns in front of me, and in another moment I was surrounded by half a dozen serenos—night policemen. One of them put the point of his lance right against my breast, another held his revolver to my head, whilst the others held their swords ready to cut me down.

I was arrested.

There was not the least use of my showing fight in this

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case. For one thing the odds were too many, and for another I had no ambition to clash with the might of the Spanish law—when it was really aroused. I had five shots in my revolver, and my finger was on the trigger. But this time I could run no bluff. I would have had either to kill or wound someone—and a hundred to one be killed in the end myself.

I laughed out loudly and stretched out my hands—empty—towards the serenos, and the one—who held the point of the lance against me—lowered it and came up close to me. He searched me quickly and found the revolver. And then the sereno who was holding his revolver in a line with my head dropped his hand and put it away into his belt. He then took my arm, and I was escorted up a street which lay off to the left from the Reyes Catòlicos. They talked excitedly during the whole time, but I said not a word.

We had not gone very far before Joaquin and Castro appeared on the scene. They had not deserted me after all. The serenos stopped as they began to talk volubly concerning me. In Spain everybody is polite—everybody listens to everybody else.

What my friends said I, of course, don't know, farther than that it was something to the effect that I was a person of a most respectable and peaceful calibre. This I could tell by the way the serenos shook their heads.

The parley ended by our all going together to the police-station.

At the police-station the serenos all began to talk together—but in the end the sereno who had found the

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revolver upon me was deputised to relate what had occurred.

He told the story in a most graphic and tragic manner. One would have thought that I was just after killing a dozen men. He would point to me every now and then in a most impressive and dramatic way.

He began by describing the hearing of the shot. He imitated the sound, thus giving me a clue to his narrative. And he went on telling the whole affair—half in pantomime, half in words. When he got to the part where he was describing his searching for me I could have laughed, but for the fact that it seemed to me to be a time for gravity. Just as he finished his yarn he took my revolver out of his pocket and laid it on the table with impressiveness. The sergeant picked it up and tried to unlock the cylinder, but he did not quite understand the mechanism of it and he handed it to the sereno, who also tried to unlock it. He, too, failed. And then I made a sign that it should be handed to me. Without any hesitation the sereno handed it over, and I pressed down on the thumb-piece, unlocked the cylinder, and ejected the cartridges out on to the table. This seemed to relieve the tension of the situation. The sergeant picked up the five cartridges and the empty shell and looked at them with care. And then everybody looked at them in turn. They were even politely offered to me for my inspection. In the end they were put into an envelope and laid beside the revolver.

I must confess that I was treated with the utmost politeness. I might have been some high, foreign official who had dropped in to see them. The police-sergeant

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gave me a cigarette, and listened with deference to Joaquin and Castro as they again set forth glowingly my virtues and general peacefulness of character. In fact, everybody was polite, from the sergeant to the serenos. And in a grave sort of a way they seemed pleased to have met me. I suppose they were grateful to me for giving them something to do.

Indeed, so polite was the sergeant that at one stage of the game I thought I was going to be let off. It was when I produced my license for the use of arms. He bowed most profoundly as I handed it to him.

But in the end I began to grasp the fact that I would have to go to gaol. Joaquin and Castro protested, but it was of no use. The sergeant apologised in a most profuse manner. He was respectful and sympathetic. But, nevertheless, to gaol I had to go. With many "buenas noches" (good-nights) and bowings and handshakings I was escorted out of the police-station by the serenos. Castro and Joaquin accompanied us.

The gaol was in the Calle Molinos, about a quarter of a mile away. Here again I encountered extreme politeness. The night director deferentially took my name and age and height, and the colour of my hair and eyes, and what I was charged with, and everything else he could gather in connection with myself, my past, and my present. He sat at a rickety table—a pale-faced, delicate-looking young Spaniard—and entered these interesting and exciting details into a book of moderate size. His method of gleaning the information was first to ask me a question. I would not understand, and then Castro or Joaquin would turn to me and ask me what I suppose was the same

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"I WAS ESCORTED OUT OF THE POLICE-STATION"

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question. I would say something in reply which they did not understand—as neither of them knew English. A this they would quickly turn and translate to the delicate-looking young Spaniard what they themselves had not understood. When my measure had been taken fully and satisfactorily, the young Spaniard signed a paper and handed it to one of the serenos. It was a receipt for my safe delivery into gaol.

And then everybody who was able to do so left. I felt lonesome as I saw the big door closing upon the serenos—and upon my friends Joaquin and Castro. For a moment I felt as a man might feel who was being left alone on a sinking ship. But I quickly recovered my spirits. My friends had assured me that they would be round to see me early next morning.

I was not put in a cell, but I was allowed to sit in the big room with the night director and his brother and the gaoler and two guards. The room was a primitive-looking, tumble-down sort of a place, with a low ceiling and strongly barred windows. It had a rather dirty but comfortable air, and it struck me that I might have got into a worse place.

And then I began to make myself agreeable. I found out that the director's name was Juan Puente, and that his brother was named Luis, and that the gaoler's name was Miguel. How I managed this it would be difficult to explain. It was partly by means of gestures and partly by odd words of Spanish. All were friendly disposed towards me, and that, of course, helped.

Puente! It was the name of a famous baritone, and it suggested to me the idea of letting them know that once

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I had sang in opera as a baritone. I managed to convey this with some ease. This was a lucky stroke of mine, for it turned out that Luis Puente, the director's brother, was an amateur baritone, and that he had sung in opera in Granada. He wrote the names of the parts he had sung on a piece of paper.

It was thus that relations were set up of a most sympathetic order.

After that I managed to explain how I had been all over the world, and what a great man I was generally. They seemed much impressed. And then I managed to tell them how I had once heard Gayarre, the Spanish tenor, sing in South America. This Spanish tenor was the greatest and the grandest singer that had ever existed! I pictured to my listeners the unutterable and boundless enthusiasm and emotion that had possessed me when I heard him sing. And then I slid skilfully to another theme. Spain was the finest and most wonderful country in the world, and as for the sport of bull-fighting—well, it was magnifico! grande! And so I went on. We were all like brothers. The only rift in the lute, as far as I was concerned, was the fact that I happened to be in gaol.

By this time daylight was coming in through the barred windows, and I suggested that we ought to have refreshments. The suggestion was received with favour, and one of the guards kindly volunteered to go out and see what he could do. He came back with a waiter from a restaurant that had just opened up. We gave our orders, and soon we were regaling ourselves with hot coffee and biscuits and aguardiente.

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After this, Luis Puente suggested that I should lie down. And I went and laid myself down on his brother's —the director's—bed and was soon asleep.

When I woke up I began to reflect upon the situation and to wonder what they were going to do with me. The glamour had passed off—the glamour that had been thrown upon the situation by my efforts of a few hours before in the direction of fraternity.

The all-round politeness was, of course, consoling, but not knowing the language made me feel uneasy. I could not tell exactly what the charge was against me. And I was afraid that something might have happened during the night, and that I would be blamed for it. One could never tell. I had, of course, witnesses to prove that I had really done nothing, but still I felt uneasy. I would have given the world to have been able to understand Spanish.

The idea came to me to appeal to the English Consul. He surely would be able to get me out of the bother. But when I turned the idea over in my mind, I rejected it. I had a strong feeling that it would be better to take my chance with the Spanish law. I felt that bringing in the Consul would only inflame and complicate matters. He would probably have to communicate with Madrid, and a big thing might be made out of nothing. I had broken the law of the country by firing off a revolver at dead of night, and there was the end of it. And I determined to take my chance with the Spaniards. It was the manlier course, and besides it struck me that it was hardly fair to overwork the British Empire.

My reverie was cut short by hearing someone speak my name in a loud voice. Bartolome! Someone was

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telling someone else a yarn in Spanish in the big outer room, and my name kept recurring in it. I knew it must be about my exploit of the night before. I listened hard, but I could make no connected sense out of it, though I could hear every word with the utmost distinctness. It was about me, and still I did not know what it was. I passed through a most uncomfortable and anxious moment. This voice might be saying all sorts of things against me, and here was I unable to reply by even a word. As I listened there came upon me a curious feeling of helplessness.

For awhile I lay quietly. And then I got up suddenly and walked into the outer room. It was better for me to face it, whatever it was.

The sun was now shining strongly through the iron barring of the window, and for the moment I was blinded. The voice stopped as I entered the room.

And then I made out who it was that had been talking. It was one of the serenos who had arrested me the night before. He was standing in the middle of the room in front of a man in a blue uniform—a man whom I had not seen before.

I looked at this man, and he looked at me. He was evidently a person of importance in the prison. I could tell this by the sereno's manner as he stood in front of him. I liked his face. It was at once intelligent and kindly. He signed to me to sit down.

I sat down and looked around. Luis Puente and his brother were gone, and there were two guards in place of the guards I had last seen. The only one that was left of my friends of the night before was the gaoler, Miguel.

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He was sitting half asleep in a chair, with a cigarette in his mouth.

I looked hard at the sereno, and waited for him to continue his narrative. But he did not speak again. He went and sat down near the door.

And then the man with the uniform came over and tried to talk with me, but it was a failure. All that I could understand was that he meant to be really kindly.

I endeavoured to ask him if I would get my revolver back, but I failed to make him understand. At last I made a rough drawing of it on a sheet of paper, and after a great deal of work he got my meaning. He then let me know that I would get it back—because I had a license. I found that as a rule I could understand him more easily than he could me.

Our attempts at exchanging ideas were interrupted by a loud knock on the big door. Miguel went and opened it, and let in a man of the Guardia Civil (Civil Guard). With the guard were two men—one of them handcuffed. He remained standing near the big door whilst the guard and the other man came up to the table where the director del arresto—the man with the blue uniform—was now sitting. The guard spoke to the director for awhile and then the prisoner was asked some question, to which he answered "Si" (Yes). The director then filled up a paper which the guard and the other man signed.

At this point I struck in and asked what the man was arrested for. The director understood my question and made an answer. But I could not understand.

The man who was handcuffed was a middle-sized, powerful-looking young man with black eyes and a square,

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strong face. He did not look like one who belonged to Granada. He had the look of the mountains about him. His skin was dark, and added to its natural darkness was the darkness that comes of exposure to wind and sun.

I was sorry for the man who was handcuffed. He was a fine, resolute-looking, young fellow. He was something between twenty-three and twenty-six years old. What his crime was I don't know. Probably something serious. He looked like a man who would do something serious if he felt that the occasion demanded it.

I spoke to him and smiled. And he smiled back. We were in the same boat—fellow prisoners. And I put my hand into my pocket, got out a peseta, and held it towards him. "Aguardiente," I said. But his hands were held so tightly together by the handcuffs that he was unable to take it. Miguel, however, came to the rescue. He put the peseta into the young fellow's pocket.

The formalities, whatever they were, were over now, and Miguel opened the big door again, and the guard and the man who was handcuffed and the other man passed out.

* * * * *

It was about nine in the morning now, and it struck me that my Spanish friends should have arrived by this time. But the best thing for me to do was to wait patiently. In fact, it was the only thing possible to do. I was absolutely powerless in the matter.

An hour passed, and I got anxious. During that time Enrique Tejada—the director del arresto—and I had been trying to talk. But ten o'clock, and no one turning up

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made me feel uneasy. Again I thought of the English Consul, but I had the same strong feeling that I had had at first against making any move in that direction.

Suddenly it occurred to me to send a note to Santiago, the manager of the hotel where I was staying. I wrote one out and gave it to Tejada, telling him as well as I could that I wanted it to be sent at once to the hotel. Tejada said "Si" most obligingly, but—well, he laid the note on the table. Again I spoke to him—and I pointed to one of the guards, meaning that I wanted him to act as messenger. Also, I took two pesetas out of my pocket and offered it to the guard. To this Tejada said, "Cinco minutos" (five minutes). But twenty minutes passed, and still the note remained on the table. Then I tried another plan. I asked if one of the guards couldn't take me to the hotel as his prisoner. There I would be able to see and talk with Santiago and Constant and arrange what could be done. After much labour on my part Tejada seemed to understand and to assent to my proposition. I was overjoyed. It had now got very hot in the prison, and being there, together with the anxiety of not knowing what was going to happen, had got on my nerves. I had given up my Spanish friends.

I stood up, and the guard stood up and buckled on his sword. It seemed too good to be true—that I was going to be let out into the open air. And it was too good to be true. For when I moved towards the big door and signed for myself and the guard to be let out, Tejada shrugged his shoulders and said "imposible."

I could, therefore, neither send a note anywhere nor do

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anything, and for the first time the whole business looked really serious. I would be taken into court—I would not understand a word—and all sorts of things might be said against me! I was now at a loss altogether. Perhaps I had been accused of something serious. Everybody was extremely polite to me, but, for all that, I was shut up here in gaol and unable to get out even a message.

And then it was that something happened. A quick, sharp knock came on the door. Miguel opened it and, to my joy, in stepped José Castro.

Never, during the whole course of my life, was I so glad to see anyone. Here was indeed a friend. One who knew the language—one who knew what had happened—one who was on my side! He knew no more English than did Tejada, but that mattered nothing. He was one of the friends who were going to get me out!

After greeting me with the utmost warmth he bowed to, and shook hands with, Tejada. And then he went over to the telephone. I had thought of trying to use the telephone before he came in, but I had given up the idea. The bigness of the task had appalled me. I could never have made the telephone people understand what I wanted.

Castro was now talking to Santiago over the telephone, and telling him all about it. I, too, went to the telephone, but as Santiago's English was of the shaky, uncertain variety—and was not improved by coming over the wire—I made way again for Castro.

Santiago would be down in viente minutos (twenty

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minutes). Castro assured me that all was well. I would be out of gaol in dos horas (two hours).

Soon Santiago arrived with Constant, a French mining engineer, who spoke both English and Spanish fluently. They laughed and shook hands with me, and assured me that all was well. And then Constant and Santiago and Castro left me, saying that they would be back soon with an order for my release.

And sure enough they were back in something over an hour—back with the order which they exchanged with Tejada for myself.

I was now free to go, and after shaking hands with Tejada and Miguel and the guards I stepped out with my friends through the big door to liberty.

But that was not the end of the affair.

II

The next day I was sitting writing in my room when a knock came on the door. A man entered and laid a paper before me on the table. There was no use of my asking him what the paper meant, though I knew well that it bore some relation to the injury I had inflicted on the Spanish law the night but one before.

I made the man sit down and gave him a cigarette. Then I called for my friend Constant. Constant came and explained that the paper meant nothing—absolutely nothing. It was only a request from the abogado to call on him next day at one o'clock. The abogado was a counsellor who acted as judge.

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"It is a mere nothing," said Constant, reassuringly. "You but call to see the judge."

By this time I was beginning to get it into my head that these mere nothings often meant a good deal in Spain. The Spaniards were great in the art of covering with velvet the grip of steel.

"Must I go to court?" I asked. "Does the judge sit in court.

"Yes, he do sit in the court. But it is a mere nothing. I go with you. Santiago go with you. All is well. It is nothing."

"But is it necessary for me to go?" I asked again. "Can't some other way be managed? Going there to-morrow will make me lose a day's work."

"Ah, that is bad. But you but go to the court."

"Look here, Constant. If I don't go, will I be arrested."

"Perhaps. I do not know well."

"Oh, let's have it straight! Will I be arrested if I don't go?"

Constant shrugged his shoulders and looked at me.

"Yes," he answered, after a pause.

And then he went out along with the man who had served the summons.

As I was going to court the next day with Constant and Santiago and Castro the nature of the defence to be set up on my behalf was explained to me. It seemed that nothing at all was to be said about the row. The story to be told to the judge was that I was explaining the mechanism of the revolver to Joaquin, and that in the handling

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of it the trigger was accidentally pressed, causing it to go off.

"I will interpret for you," said Constant.

It was a simple and ingenious defence, and it had the quality that defences usually have—that of being calculated to set forth in a glowing light the innocence of the person accused. It was my innocence first and verity second. But I was completely in the hands of my interpreters. I was as wax.

Constant explained to me that if it became known that there had been a row it would then be plain that the revolver was fired with intent. Intent was nothing, of course, Constant explained in his usual style. But—well, if it were proved, I might possibly have to go to prison. The law in Spain was very odd when the question of intent had to be considered!

As a matter of fact, my only intent in firing off the revolver at all was a peaceful one—to stop the row. I had stopped it, and most probably saved life, and for reward I had been clapped into gaol and afterwards had to go through all this bother. I had received the peacemaker's usual reward.

We were in the court punctually by one o'clock. It was a small court adjoining the great court, and the abogado sat in a big chair. Above him was a picture of the young Spanish King, Alphonso XIII. The picture was in the centre of a great, square piece of stiffened red cloth, which ran nearly up to the ceiling and then was curved forward, so as to throw a shade over where the abogado—the judge—sat.

We all bowed to the abogado, who motioned us to sit

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down. And then I noticed that Joaquin—my companion of the adventure—was sitting next to the abogado. Joaquin came from his place of honour and shook me warmly by the hand—and the abogado smiled in my direction. This looked promising. It seemed that Joaquin was an advocate—a barrister—who did not quite get the number of briefs to which his talents entitled him. It was he, I found out afterwards, who was the engineer of my defence.

The abogado was a man of about forty-five. He wore a full, dark beard. His forehead was intellectual, and in his face was a fine, high expression.

To people living in England it is impossible to describe exactly the character and the air of this Spanish court of justice. It had not the severity nor the forbidding coldness of look of an English court—nor its absoluteness. It was much more human. One felt that under certain conditions a greater degree of justice and equity would be rendered in a place of justice such as this. In a place of justice such as this subtler things than a mere cognisance of facts would count. Sympathy would count. There would be a full considering and a full account taken of provocation. Here in this court the truth would be grasped that the provoker is at the very least equally guilty with the provoked — that truth of which the English law takes so little heed. In an English court an undue reverence for the thing that is called "a fact" often causes rank injustice to be dealt out by a judge.

I contrasted the bearing and manner of the abogado with the bearing of some of the men who deal out justice in the courts of London, and I am bound to say that the

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abogado by no means suffered in comparison. True, he smoked cigarettes whilst in court, but, on the other hand, he was not rude. He would not be the man to take advantage of his position to insult people who were in trouble. Neither would he make feeble, pointless jokes anent the misfortunes of others.

No one was sworn. The proceedings began by the questioning of the serenos—two of whom were in attendance. In the meantime my revolver and cartridges had been brought in and laid upon the table before the abogado. And the serenos went on to tell of my arrest and of the finding of the revolver upon me. I was then asked—through Constant—if I had fired with intent.

"No," I answered.

The serenos were then asked if I had fired with intent. The answer was that they did not know. They had not seen me fire the shot.

Everybody in the court was smoking cigarettes—all but myself. I had some in my pocket in a case, but I hardly liked to take one out, for it struck me that perhaps it would not be considered etiquette for the criminal of the party to smoke. I thought that perhaps that was the reason why Constant or Santiago had not offered me one. But the not offering of a cigarette to me may have been an oversight.

Off in front of me sat a very stout Spaniard, who looked for all the world like a typical English bailiff of the County Court. He had the same big, heavy build, and the same florid colour of face, and the same dull, aggrieved expression. He, too, was smoking a cigarette.

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At last the abogado opened a big law book, and after turning over the pages till he got to the place he wanted he beckoned to Constant. Constant went over and got the book—and then I was shown the passage relating to the firing off of firearms within the limits of a town. The fine for the same was between five and fifty pesetas. Constant translated it to me, and told me that the abogado had decided to fine me only ten pesetas. This I at once paid, and I was given a receipt for it from a grave old Spanish gentleman who wore spectacles, and whose cigarette was nearly smoked to the end. I offered him one from my own case, which he accepted with a "Gracias, señor." I put the case back into my pocket without taking one out for myself. I was not yet quite sure of my ground.

Just after this Santiago came up and acquainted me with the fact that I had to pay the costs of the court—eighteen pesetas. Again I shelled out and again I was given a receipt by the grave old Spanish gentleman with the spectacles. Things seemed to be going with much smoothness. I was supplying oil to the wheels of the law.

But was I going to get back my revolver? It was one of the best revolvers that could be got in London, and everybody in Granada had admired it—policemen and everybody—and I was afraid that some official might pay it the delicate compliment of confiscating it even though I did possess a license for the carrying of arms.

I spoke to Constant of my fears in a low tone, and he walked over to the abogado and conferred with him. The result was satisfactory, for the abogado smiled and beckoned to me. I walked up to the table and he

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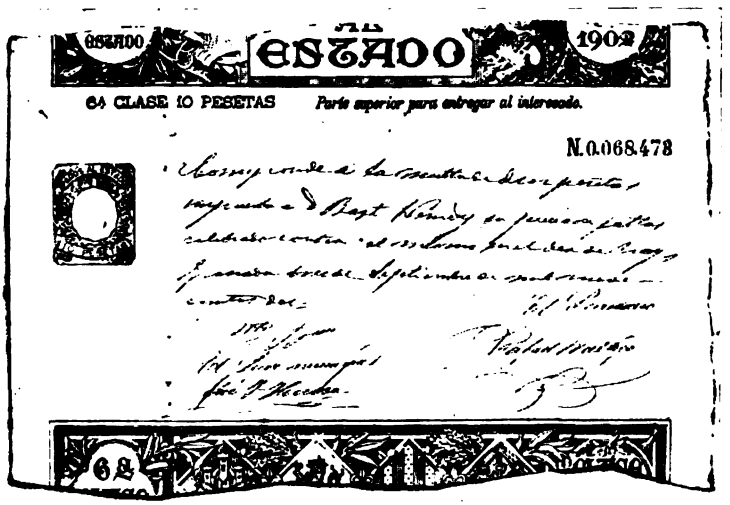
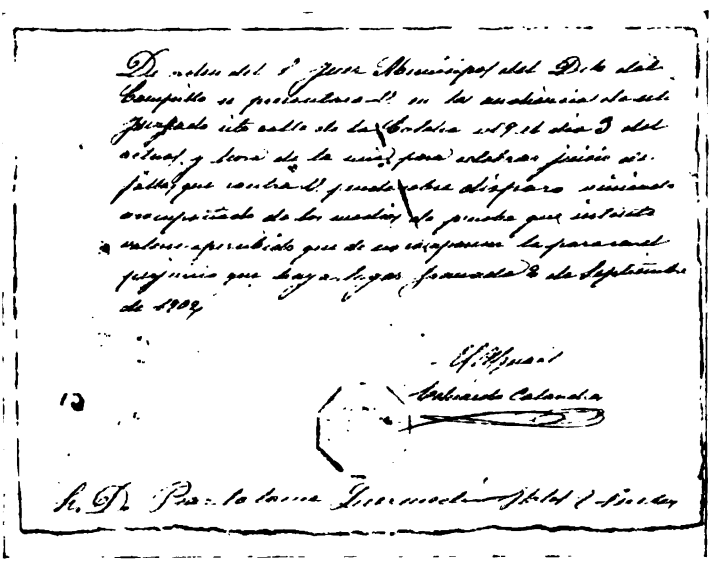


ESTADO 1902

64 CLASE 10 PESETAS *Parte superior para entregar al interesado.*

N.0.068.478

THE LEGAL INSTRUMENT SETTING FORTH THE AUTHOR'S "CRIME" AND THE FINE FOR IT



THE SUMMONS SERVED ON THE AUTHOR FOR FIRING HIS REVOLVER IN THE STREET

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handed me the revolver along with the five cartridges and the empty shell. I thanked him and went back to my seat.

The trial was over now, and everybody looked satisfied. Even the stout Spaniard who looked like an English County Court bailiff — even he wore an air of contentment. I felt contented myself. The trial had lasted something over an hour.

Suddenly I noticed the judge looking at me. And then he spoke to me from his chair of judgment. Constant translated what he said. He was asking me if I were pleased—if I were satisfied with the trial.

I stood up and answered through Constant, that I was very much pleased—that I was very satisfied indeed—and that I was more than delighted to have had the honour of meeting the judge. The uniqueness of the question—of a judge asking one who had been a prisoner if he were satisfied with his trial—appealed to me. I wondered if an Englishman had ever been asked such a question before.

And then Constant and Santiago and Joaquin and Castro and I rose and shook hands with everybody in court. I even grasped the hand of the stout bailiff-looking Spaniard with fervour. And I managed to make the judge understand—as I shook his hand for the second and last time—that I hoped to see him again soon — in London!

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IX.—PASSING ALONG

The night before I left Granada Santiago gave a dinner in my honour. Josè Castro, Constant, Rafael, and several others were present. It was a clear, warm night, and we dined together at a big table in the garden.

I sat next to Joaquin, the advocate who had engineered my defence at the trial. I was endeavouring to tell him what great friends and comrades-in-arms briefless barristers and journalists were in London. I tried to picture the affinity between the two. Joaquin looked intelligent and then he endeavoured to tell me something —what, I don't know.

We had a gay and jovial and jolly time. Santiago came to the front like a hero of old. He made the strongest sort of a requisition upon the forces of the cellar of the hotel. The way he commanded Emilio to bring up the bottles caused me to gaze upon him with respectful admiration.

All of us made speeches at the dinner. They were of a complimentary, flowing, and flowery nature—as speeches at dinners ought to be. As near as I could get at it the burden of the speeches was that I was all right—was one of the best. They were much charmed because of the fact that I had graced Andalusia with my presence. Everybody was proud to have met me. Indeed, we were

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all proud and pleased and gratified to have met one another.

The end of each speech was punctuated by the commanding voice of the noble Santiago as he ordered Emilio to bring up yet another bottle.

My speech was by common consent admitted to be the speech of the evening. I praised Andalusia and everything Andalusian to the skies; I praised Granada and all its works of art and monuments; I praised Santiago and the hotel—and more especially its wines; I praised every one at table; and I praised Spain in general and all its wonderful sports and institutions. In fact, I gave forth a pæan of praise at the top of a naturally strong voice.

By this time I had, of course, become somewhat facile in the art of praising Spain. I had done it so often.

I sat down in the midst of tremendous applause. Rafael, who had not understood a word of what I had said, applauded even more loudly than any one else. I thought he was going to break the table.

And then Constant arose and made a translation of my speech. Again there was applause—if possible greater than ever. During it Rafael shook me fervently by the hand. "Mucho bueno Inglès!" he exclaimed, with emotion. When the applause softened down I got up and made a few closing remarks.

After that we turned in.

At five o'clock in the morning I was up and getting ready to start. It had been arranged that Santiago, Constant, and Joaquin were to accompany me along the road for a few kilòmetros. My next point was Jaèn, a town

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ninety-seven kilòmetros from Granada. It lay up due north. It would take me three days to make the journey.

At six o'clock the four of us were in a carriage bowling down the road leading out from the Alhambra. And soon we were out through the low, Moorish arch at the entrance of the gardens. I turned for a last look at this arch. Many a hot day I had toiled up the steep road towards it and passed through it into the grateful, cool shade. Most likely I would never see the strange old arch again.

We were going now at a swinging rate along the Calle de los Reyes Catòlicos. The shops were beginning to be opened, and people were moving about and along.

And then we turned to the right by the big plaza at the end of the street—and to the right again. And we were on a road that went out in a straight line into the distance—out as far as the eye could see. The road to Madrid.

Little was said as we went along. Partings have always in them a touch of sadness. You can never tell if you will meet people again. You may have shaken them by the hand for the last time. It is hard to meet people and to like people and to pass from them and never see them again.

* * * * *

The carriage had stopped, and Constant was strapping up my knapsack on to my back. We were now some kilòmetros away from Granada. The town was not to be seen. It was lying off behind the mountains.

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They were going back along the road now, and I was standing looking after them. They had shaken me again and again by the hand, and had wished me all sorts of luck on my journey. Joaquin had told me, through Constant, that some time or another he might come and see me in London. Poor old Joaquin! He had the goodness and kindness of heart of the Andalusian.

I watched the carriage till it was out of sight.

For a while I felt low-spirited, but in time it began to wear off. It was a beautiful morning, and the air was fresh and cool, and soon I felt myself again. I began to think of what I was going to see and what would happen. It was grand to walk briskly along this fine road, and after an hour or two's tramp I was as right and as fit as a nail.

As I was coming up to the first pueblo (village) I heard in the distance the barking of dogs, and soon I saw two of them running towards me. But I was fully prepared to receive them. Constant had warned me that the dogs in the country were savage and dangerous, and I had provided myself with a heavy làtigo (whip). I had, of course, my revolver to hand, but shooting dogs was no part of my plan. It would only get me into needless trouble.

As the dogs were rushing towards me I slipped off my knapsack and got off the làtigo, which was strapped along the top of it. Then I stood a little to one side of the knapsack and waited, my làtigo grasped in my left hand behind my back. Had the dogs seen it they might not have rushed on me with such valour.

The foremost dog was a big, ferocious fellow. His

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hair bristled and stood around his neck, forming a sort of collar.

As he came on I backed as though afraid, and he jumped at me as though he would take me down at a bite. But—well, he met the làtigo right across the eyes. And as he howled and swerved he met it again and again. He stood still, and gave what I suppose was a howl of wonder, and I got him again right in the middle of the howl. It was a glorious moment.

Just as I was swinging the làtigo to let him have one for good measure, he turned and executed with great swiftness a strategic movement to the rear—to the village from whence he came. His tail hung limp as he hurried along. I suppose he was going to tell the other dogs that it was just as well to treat me with civility.

I looked round for his companion in the charge. But I could see him nowhere. He was in all likelihood a dog of a discreet calibre.

I picked up my knapsack and walked into the village. When I got there I saw the big dog with whom I had had the interview. I whistled to him. But he was coy. He withdrew himself.

I went into a posada (inn) and made signs that I wanted something to eat. I thought it just as well not to trust to the few words of bad Spanish that I had at my command. A sign is a sign, a gesture is a gesture, but a mispronounced word is either nothing or—what is worse—misleading.

The woman to whom I made the signs was rather good looking. She understood at once what I meant. A man, who was probably her husband, was sitting at

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the farther end of the posada smoking a cigarette. He came forward and looked at me.

"Buenos dias" (good day), he said.

I bowed and wished him good day, and then he went and sat down to resume his flow of thought. His curiosity had been satisfied.

I turned towards the door of the posada, and in front of it there was standing a crowd of men, women, and children. The whole village had evidently turned out to see what I was like. They stared at me in a frank, natural way. I waved my hand and smiled to them.

"Buenos dias," I said to them.

"Buenos dias. Buenos dias," said several of them. And then some of them came right into the posada to get a closer look at me. My knapsack claimed especial attention. One little girl, with round blue eyes, examined the straps of it.

The woman of the posada had gone to get something ready for me to eat, and I thought I would try and engage the posadero (the man of the inn) in conversation. He seemed not unwilling, and we began to try to talk to each other. But the labour was of too vast a nature. We had to give it up. The posadero relapsed back again into thought, and began to roll for himself a fresh cigarette.

Just then one of the Guardias Civiles came into the inn. He looked at me closely, and then asked me several questions at once. I did not understand his questions, but I knew what their general drift must be. He wished to know who and what I was, what my inten-

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tions were, where I was going, and if I were a person of a generally sound and honourable character.

He was a fine-looking young fellow, and was armed with a Mauser rifle, a bayonet, and a revolver. He wore a three-cornered hat with a piece of white linen hanging from the back of it for protection from the sun.

I answered his questions by producing my passport. He held it upside down and scanned it with much care. The crowd round the door pressed nearer.

The English passport is a large, impressive document. The man who designed it knew what he was about. It fills the bill. It is well and clearly printed on good, thick paper, and is a thing of much size and space. It crackles with much importance when it is being opened or flourished in the air. Even a Fiji Islander would know that such a document could only come from a Government of great weight and might and heft.

The guard handed me back the passport and bowed. And then I showed him a Spanish paper, published in Seville, in which was printed a couple of paragraphs concerning me. This, combined with the passport, clinched the matter of my introduction to the village. Again the guard bowed.

By this time the woman of the posada had got something ready for me to eat. She beckoned to me, and I went into a big room that opened off from the back of the posada. But just as I got in it struck me that I had forgotten something. I ought to have invited the guard and the rest of the people to eat with me. It is the custom in Spain. So out I came again and I invited the guard and every one in sight to join me in my repast. They

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thanked me, but did not respond to my invitation which is also the custom in Spain. It is just as well for travellers to remember this latter part of the custom.

The ceiling of the big room into which I had been invited was low, and the floor of it was paved with small cobble-stones. In fact, the whole floor of the place seemed to be paved in this way. It was the first thing I had noticed.

In the centre of the table upon which the meal was spread was a small skin of wine with a mouthpiece standing out from the top of it. I poured some of it into the thick glass that stood near my plate. It was Valdepeñas—a yellow-coloured wine tasting like sherry. It was a good wine, but it had rather a hard, peculiar flavour, perhaps owing to being kept in a skin.

The rest of the meal was composed of bread and fried eggs and ham—not the ham one gets in England, but the ham of Spain. The combination of Valdepeñas and bread and eggs and ham was good. Indeed, I have often fared much worse. I have often in my time dined off a combination of nothing.

After I had demolished the lot I asked how much the charge was. (Cuanto?) But the woman would take nothing. I appealed to the man whom I thought to be the posadero. But he seemed helpless in the matter. All he did was to shrug his shoulders and smile. I had happened amongst hospitable people.

I then tried to find out the name of the village, but either they did not understand my question or I could not follow the name when it was pronounced. And after

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thanking the woman and her husband I picked up my knapsack and went out.

Over on the other side of the road was the group that had stood outside the posada when I first entered it. They were looking at me and talking amongst themselves. As I passed them I raised my hat. The children of the group followed me as I went on out of the village. I was honoured with a rearguard.

* * * * *

About an hour after this I came up with a little old man who was going in the same direction as myself. He carried a folded-up blanket upon his back, and at once I knew him for a tramp. He had the characteristics that tramps have the world over—characteristics difficult to describe, but plain to the eye of experience. The sign of the road and of the open air and of the instinct to wander was written all over him.

I was glad to see him. He was indeed one who might turn out to be a companion for me.

I stopped him, and we began to try and talk to each other—and, curiously enough, we in a way understood each other. There must have been some affinity between us. But even if there were not, there was still the tie that binds tramps the world over. We were going the same way.

His name was Aquilino. This I soon found out. He was going to Madrid—Madrid that was off to the north more than four hundred kilòmetros. I tried to find out why he was going to Madrid, and after a while I understood that he had a son there.

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He must have been at least sixty years old, and his eyes were brown and his skin was very brown and very wrinkled. His face had a gentle expression and his voice was quiet. His hair and beard were white. He was a very little old man—a little worn-out old man whom the world did not want. I felt very sorry for him, and I determined to keep him with me for a while.

I asked how he managed with the dogs on the road, and he gave me to understand that the perros (dogs) did not bother him much. Perhaps they considered that he was not one to be afraid of.

We walked slowly along together—he with his blanket and I with my knapsack. I showed him the làtigo that I had for the dogs. He smiled and said something that I did not understand.

All around us on the road the mountains were showing in the distance. We were still within the range of the Sierra Nevada. We would be in it for some time. And then we would pass into another range, and then to Jaèn.

The country around looked lonesome. Not many people lived in it. Constant, who had surveyed it, had told me that it was much the same all the way up to Madrid. It was a country full of beautiful colour and possessed of a strange stillness of aspect. As we were going along Aquilino paused and pointed towards the mountains to the west.

"Aguila," he said.

I stopped and looked. Off there, high above, a great bird was poised. An eagle. It was a long time since I had seen an eagle before.

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It seemed to stay motionless in the air. And then it began gradually to descend. And then it rose again—and went round slowly in a circle. And all the while its wings did not appear to move. It moved as though impelled by some power other than the power of flight.

Suddenly it swooped, or rather fell—fell so quickly that the eye could not follow it. A tragedy was passing before us. And then from a tree beneath a bird began to fly away. It flew slowly—reluctantly:—as if it had left its mate behind.

At about five o'clock in the afternoon we came in sight of a village. It stood off from the road about a mile to the right of us, and I proposed that we should go there and get something to eat. I was not hungry, but I thought that my companion might be. He looked as if a good meal would do him no harm.

At first Aquilino did not want to come. I suppose he was afraid of the Guardia Civil. But I prevailed upon him, and we cut off from the road and on towards the village.

We were in it now—a curious old Moorish-looking village of narrow, uneven streets and low, strong-walled houses. It was a much larger place than the village I had been in last, and it looked as if the people of it saw strangers now and then, for we did not attract the attention I had expected. Even the Guardia Civil did not ask us questions. He only came up—looked at us—and passed on.

We walked on through it till my eye caught what seemed to be the fonda (hotel). I stalked in as if I owned it—Aquilino following behind.

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"WE DID NOT ATTRACT THE ATTENTION I HAD EXPECTED"

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"Buenos dias," I said to a man who came to meet me, and I signed to Aquilino to translate. Aquilino did not know English, but he knew what was wanted, and he fell in at once with my idea—that he was to act as though he were able to interpret for me. Life on the road sharpens a man's wits.

Thanks to Aquilino things travelled here in the fonda with smoothness. The people of the place evidently took him for my bodyguard and factotum-in-chief. And soon we were seated at a table discussing the provisions—or, rather, Aquilino was discussing them. I was not hungry.

I watched the old man as he ate without letting him see that I was watching him. It must have been a long time since he had had a proper meal at a table. It was easy to see that he had been on the road—roughing it—for a long time. He ate nearly everything from his hand. It is a habit into which a tramp naturally falls.

I would have given worlds to have been able to talk with him. I would have liked to have found out his view point of men and of things and of the world. He must have had a philosophy of his own concerning life just as all men have—whether they are able to express it or not. He must once have had ambitions, even though they were now perhaps dead. This little old tramp with the brown, wrinkled face and the white hair! I watched him as he broke his bread and slowly ate it. I noticed the change that gradually came into his face as he drank his wine. What could he be thinking of? What memories were coming up before him? Did the wine bring back to him some feeling of the magic of his

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youth? He was a Spaniard and I was an Englishman. We were men of a different race. We could not exchange a thought. We could hardly even exchange a word. And still—and still there was a link between us. Had he suddenly told me his history—in words that were clear to me—I felt that it would have been a history the like of which I had known of before.

Race is a big word, but Circumstance is a bigger word.

We stayed at the fonda till the next morning, and then I paid the bill and we went off. To me the going along the road was like old times. The only real difference was that I was tramping along in a country where I didn't know the language. But the circumstances were in a way much about the same, and I had a companion with me who was going the same way. Little, wrinkled, brown-faced Aquilino.

The road wound along through the beautiful sunlit mountains—a fine, good road along which it was a joy to walk. I know of nothing better than walking along a road in the clear, open sunlight.

We did not meet many people, and the dogs gave us little trouble. Now and then we came upon a man of the Guardia Civil, but he let us pass without question.

Campillo de Arenas. We came near to this village towards the evening, and the dogs came out to look at us. But I showed them the làtigo.

Here there was some trouble about Aquilino. The guard came up and asked him some question, and Aquilino fumbled all through his pockets and at last produced a battered-looking paper. The guard looked

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at it and then asked him more questions—and I was wondering what might happen. Aquilino looked perturbed. I gathered then that the paper he had showed the guard was a paper describing himself, which the law required a Spaniard to carry. Evidently there was something not quite up to the mark about it or it was out of date. The guard was adopting a stern, judicial sort of an attitude, perhaps in a measure for the benefit of the people of the village who had thronged round us.

Then it was that I pulled out my impressive-looking passport—my English passport. It made a crackling, important sound as I flourished it before the guard. And I talked loudly in English to the effect that Aquilino was my servitor and bodyguard generally, and that I had brought him with me from Granada. Aquilino also lifted up his voice, and between the noble-looking English passport and him and myself the affair was settled. What affair I don't quite know. But, anyhow, the guard was vanquished. He stepped down from his lofty horse.

I liked the people I met in Campillo de Arenas. They had the simplicity that country people have the world over, and added to it they had the charm and grace and lightness of bearing of the Andalusian. There was nothing of the clodhopper air about them, such as one may see about the people of a small village in England, and still no one could mistake them for anything but country people. Country people with grace.

The accommodation we got in Campillo de Arenas was hardly the best going. I would as lief have camped

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out. But Aquilino and I didn't mind that very much. We were old campaigners.

Jaèn. At last we were coming towards it. It was the morning of the day but one after we had been in Campillo de Arenas. We saw it first through a gap in the mountains—about seven kilòmetros off from us. And then we lost sight of it again in a bend of the road.

The colour of the soil of the country had now changed. It had turned from dark brown to red, and the vegetation was much stronger. There was more life in the soil—more vigour in the earth. We were still in a mountain country, but the sterility had gone. The country behind us, though beautiful to the eye, had still a sterile, unfruitful aspect.

It was a very old town, this Jaèn. The Romans had been here. The Moors had been here. Its name had an odd sound, just as (hine) would sound in English. It had been the scene of assaults and strife between opposing races. And still it remained here in the mountains. An old town.

In the town itself there was an air of bustle and activity, and the people looked altogether different from the people of Granada. They moved around with energy. One felt that they were afflicted with the ambition to indulge in toil. The town was only ninety-seven kilòmetros from Granada, but as far as the difference in the people was concerned it might have been a thousand. In Granada every one seemed to be lost in an eternal siesta. But here, in Jaèn, the people were very much awake. It may have been the difference in the soil

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and the air that caused it, but, whatever the cause, the difference in the people was striking.

I don't mean, of course, to suggest that Granada was in any way inferior to Jaèn because the people of Granada took life with restful ease. Rather is it the other way about. I personally prefer people who know and appreciate the full value of leisure. These hurrying, bustling people and these hurrying, bustling towns and nations by no means have the meaning in the life of the world that is generally imagined. They are but mere puffing bubbles on the great river of Time. And for this blessing thanks be to Heaven. No, when I compare the people of Jaèn to the people of Granada I am only telling of what came under my eye—as an observer.

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In some curious way Jaèn suggested—to me—an English town. It was essentially a Spanish town—and still the suggestion of England was in it. As I walked through it I thought of Richmond, though it was outwardly in no way like Richmond. Indeed, it rather looked like a small Seville—a Seville of uneven, steep, up and down streets. In the middle of it was an immense, irregularly shaped plaza. To the right a jagged mountain towered above it. In the distance—when I had seen the town first—this mountain seemed rather off from it. But now it stood right up against the town—close and steep and threatening.

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Here it was that I had a difference of opinion with

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Aquilino. He would not come with me to the hotel. I tried all the persuasion that my limited stock of Spanish words would allow of, but it was of no use. And then I tried to bring him with me by force. But he was firm, and in the end I handed him three pesetas, with the understanding that he was to shift for himself, and that he was to meet me the next morning in the plaza, so that we could continue our journey north together. He insisted, however, on giving me back two pesetas. "Uno" (one) was enough for him.

At the fonda (hotel) I cut rather a poor figure, as far as making myself understood was concerned. The few words of bad Spanish that I had picked up turned out to be the merest reeds. No one seemed to have the remotest idea of what I was driving at whenever I tried to ask a question.

The place was kept by a very nice old lady, who seemed to take some sort of an interest in me. First I would ask the waiter a question. He would look puzzled, and he would call the other waiter to the rescue. He also would look puzzled. Then the old señora—who sat in a great chair—would be referred to. To tell the truth she never looked puzzled at all, but always talked to me quickly and at length. She was kindly disposed, but unintelligible.

The chief question I wanted to ask was when dinner would be ready. I was hungry. And the mystery of my question was at last dragged from its lair by the old señora's daughter. I was told that dinner would be ready at "siete media" (half-past seven). After this I subsided. I indulged in no more questions. Life was too

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short. Evidently the people here spoke Spanish with a different accent from that spoken in Granada.

The dinner was a most free and easy affair, and most enjoyable. The waiters served it in their shirt-sleeves and cracked jokes with the guests, who were all Spaniards. I was looked upon with curiosity, and one of the waiters came over to me and, after a while, made me understand that a "caballero" near the other end of the table wished to enter into conversation with me. The "caballero" knew English! I smiled and looked towards the "caballero" and waited for him to open fire. He was rather a smart-looking young Spaniard.

He smiled as I smiled, but he said nothing. And then it dawned upon me that he was waiting for me to talk. I presume he wanted to hear a sample of the English language.

I made some remark about the weather, and all at once there was a sudden lull in the conversation which was going round. Every one became attentive. They wanted to hear how their compatriot acquitted himself as a linguist.

The young Spaniard answered my remark, but I understood him no more than the dead. His English was of a make weird and curious—something like my own Spanish.

I pretended, however, to have understood him perfectly. In Spain politeness is as necessary as salt is to an egg.

"Buena Inglès" (good English) I said. He understood what I meant and he looked pleased. Indeed, everybody at table looked pleased. Their compatriot had acquitted himself with honour. I had said the tactful thing.

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During dinner this young man enlivened me with his conversation. He seemed to burn with the desire to tell me a number of things. He would address a cryptic remark to me in alleged English, to which I would reply in English. After each reply I would wind up with the compliment in Spanish ("Buena Inglès") upon his high linguistic attainment.

As the dinner got towards its end I found myself becoming a favourite—rapidly attaining to popularity. Even the waiters began to beam brotherliness upon me. I do believe that I could have got credit at that fonda. Such is the power of politeness—in Spain.

When my linguistic friend arose from the table he said "Good night!" These were the only two words of his that I understood, and I was not sorry to hear them. His conversation was getting to be rather a strain.

* * * * *

The next morning I went to the plaza, but I could see nothing of Aquilino. I waited round for a couple of hours and then I went back to the fonda.

I was sorry that he had not turned up, but I suppose he had reasons of his own for not caring to accompany me. Poor old Aquilino! It may have been that he had thought he could better avoid the attentions of the guards in the villages by going alone. But whatever the reason I was sorry not to see him. I had intended to have him with me as a companion and a sort of interpreter. But that was impossible now. And I altered my plans somewhat.

I stayed in Jaèn till the next day.

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X.—THE TOWN OF THE SWORD

It rises over the horizon—an old battlemented town more than two thousand years old. The world-conquering Romans came in their overwhelming might and took it from the Carpetani, and it came to pass that the power of Rome fell, and into the town came the Visigoths and then came Arabs and then came Christians. A town of assaults and sieges and sallies—a warrior town of old walls and towers and battlements. Gone are the Romans and the Visigoths and the Arabs. And still there is the town. Rising over the horizon.

Toledo. The town of the sword. Herein were made the wonderful shining death-blades—the terrible, smooth, keen-edged swords that flashed and killed in the hands of brave men. Toledo. The very word is like the blade of a sword and like the thrust of a sword. A word at once beautiful and sinister—as a gleaming, shining blade of steel.

* * * * *

This old town of war and the sword which lies near to the centre of Spain. The Tajo roars around it—a roaring swift river banked with precipitous cliffs. Nature has made of Toledo a fortress. A rock-bound, water-bound fortress. The streets are narrow and winding and circuitous—streets rising and falling and twisting and

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turning, a maze of narrow streets twisted inextricably, running up and down and here and there, going round and round, ending in small plazas, ending nowhere, beginning nowhere. A confusing, wonderful maze of a town—rock-bound, water-bound; a crooked, old town of strange towers and arches, of strong-walled houses, of mosques and synagogues and churches and monasteries; a town of the Roman, the Visigoth, the Arab, the Christian; a strangely charactered town expressing the difference of race and creed and conquered and conqueror and Roman and Arab and Christian and Jew—a town expressing the power of combat. An amazing, wonderful place.

The town of the sword.

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XI.—THE TRASPARENTE

I

With a changing and transcendent glory the light was pouring into the cathedral through the great rose windows, coming in as if with an infinite ocean-volume of sound, changing ever changing, colouring in strange ways, now shining with unimaginable brilliance and splendour, now coming in as a soft dream-light, flashing here, flashing yonder, always coming, coming as if with an overwhelming, stupendous, soft sound.

II

I stood before the Trasparente and vaguely wondered how the power had come to man to bring into the world such a glorious work of art.

It was a grouping of many figures—a mystic, vision-conception in marble—and it reached far up till it met the light coming through a window high and distant. And the light illumined the figures softly.

This work of a beauty mysterious and strange and ineffable. What was the impulse that had guided the mind and the hand of the artist! Surely it was not the impulse to get gold, nor even the impulse to gain honour and fame. The name of him who had conceived this art-

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vision was lost. There was only the name left of him who had finished it. But here it stood in its holiness, its splendour, its nobility. The men were gone to dust but their work was here. They had left behind them in the cathedral of Toledo this glorious Trasparente.

To look upon it brought before the mind the conviction that in the body of man there must live a soul. A soaring, wonderful, divine soul. Who could doubt that man possessed within him an ethereal, indescribable power! That he did possess this was forced upon the mind with a power overwhelming. Here before the eyes was the evidence in lasting stone. This Trasparente.

At the base of the grouping to the left there was the figure of a woman. A woman with a divinely beautiful face. A face in which there was an expression of tenderness and nobility and chastity. It was the face of a virgin and still it was the face of a woman.

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This Trasparente.

Well might one kneel before such a glorious, wonderful, marbled vision. Well might one render obeisance before it. If one might bow before the power of the sword as expressed in the person and pomp of a king, surely one might bow before the expression of the power of the soul. Nay, one might bow lower.

III

"Kyrie eleison—Kyrie eleison."

Voices were chanting in the beginning of the Mass and through the cathedral there was the sonorous roll

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of the organ and the silenciàrios were standing on guard so that none might pass and disturb the solemn rite—grave-faced men who imposed silence and quietude. And the Mass went on and on till it came to the end, and then from the altar there came a procession of robed and vestmented figures, and from a great, high, strangely stained window the light streamed upon them as they passed in silence, and the silenciàrios turned and followed them, and the procession went on and on till it was lost in the distance and the shadows of the cathedral.

IV

It was nearing the close of day and again I was in the cathedral. Its wonder and its beauty and its strangeness impressed me more than I have the power to tell. To see it one might well come from the end of the world. One might well come from over far lands and oceans. It was the most wonderful place I had ever seen.

La Oraciòn. Voices were sounding through the cathedral. It was the evening prayer. The day was closing.

And the voices were dying down and the shadows were coming as I went again and stood before the Trasparente.

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XII.—MADRID

I

MADRID is not an old-looking town, and the first impression that it gives a traveller coming up from Andalusia is that it is not typically Spanish. Seville is like the impression that one forms from what one has read or heard. It is picturesque and old and quaint-looking and southern. But Madrid looks modern—ultra-modern. It has the look of Paris and the look of parts of New York—without, of course, the bustling atmosphere of New York. But it has almost the noise of New York—at least along the Calle de Alcala and in the big plaza, the Puerta del Sol. Bells are jangling through the day and night and always there is going the buzz and whirr of electric trams. And perhaps I am not going too far if I say that the Calle de Alcala—from the Puerta del Sol to the Plaza de Madrid—is one of the noisiest streets in the world. The noise really only slackens for about an hour in the early morning. In Madrid no one ever seems to go to bed. It is what might be called an all-night town. At two o'clock in the morning the Puerta del Sol is just as alive as it is in the middle of the day.

I have said that Madrid looks ultra-modern, but I must also say that the people do not look quite up to their

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town. This fact soon becomes apparent to the eye. The up-to-dateism of Madrid does not seem to fit its people. The electric lights and the electric trams and all the other modernisms appear to be an anachronism. I am not suggesting that the Spaniards are in any way behindhand. I am only suggesting that all this up-to-dateism and alleged improvement does not harmonise with their character. I presume that the only reason it exists in the town at all is because of the vagaries and pushfulness of people whose only object in life is to make money.

The Madrileños move easily along the streets apparently oblivious to the excessive modernity of their town. Many beautiful women are to be seen. But they are not to be compared to their sisters in Andalusia. The women of Andalusia are the most beautiful I have ever seen. Indeed, a plain woman is a rarity. In Seville if a man were to see a plain or an ugly woman he would be apt to turn and stare at her as he would at some curiosity.

The first thing that strikes one as being really Spanish in Madrid are the bull-fighters. They congregate in the Puerta del Sol. They are invariably Andalusians—dark, lithe, strong-looking men with hard faces. They wear the same dress as do the bull-fighters in the Sierpes in Seville. One will know them by their broad, stiff-brimmed, low-crowned black hats, and by their black, tight-fitting clothes. The matadores wear queues which are curled up tight to the backs of their close-cropped heads. The other toreros are not allowed to wear the queue.

Although the bull-fighters have the look of absolute fighting men, they, in no sense, look like soldiers. Soldiers wear a machine-made air. One does not too often see the

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face of a fighter amongst them. But the toreros are all picked and proved men—good men.

In Madrid I saw a bull-fight. I had been told that the bull-fight I had seen in Seville was not the real thing—that only novillos (young bulls) were used.

One of the espadas was the famous Luis Mazzantini. The other was Vicente Pastor (Chico de la blusa). Mazzantini was a giant of a man with an intelligent, cynical face.

All that I can say is that I much preferred the bull-fight I saw in Seville. It was presented with far more dramatic and effective ceremony. As to the bulls, they were five years old in Madrid, whilst they were four in Seville. That was the difference. But as far as I could see the younger bulls were just as game and as dangerous as the bulls in Madrid. And the Seville fight was a picturesque spectacle whilst the Madrid fight was not.

* * * * *

La Juego de Pelota. The game of ball. I saw it played in a place off from the Puerta del Sol. I was charged a peseta to go in, and soon I found myself in the gallery of a great oblong hall. The hall was something over seventy yards long and about thirteen yards across. The gallery extended along its whole length.

The gallery was filled with excited men, shouting. And men with flat, Scotch-looking caps were going around laying and taking and offering bets. And beneath, on the floor of the great hall, the game was going swiftly.

Pelota. I had heard of it, but I had never seen it till now. It was played with a white rubber ball—much

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about the size of a cricket ball. The ball flew the length of the hall, struck and rebounded from the wall, and was caught by a player as it was flying in the air and was flung mightily back against the wall. It rebounded and spun through the air and was caught and flung back again. However low or high the ball was flying it was deftly caught and flung. Sometimes the players leaped high up into the air after the ball, sometimes they dashed and crouched low to the floor. They caught the ball in narrow, curving, wicker-made holds, the ends of which were fastened into straps which pended from their right wrists. They ran and leaped and crouched and sprang high up into the air to intercept the flying, whirling, white ball. Hardly was the ball ever let touch the ground. It was caught smashing into the wicker-made hold, was swung back, and was flung flying out towards the far wall. The players were lithe, quick, supple, vigorous young men of Navarre. Men wearing flat worsted caps. Perfect, fit athletes who never lost breath, nor laboured, nor panted in their quick-moving, quick-running, mightily-swinging work. Gracefully-moving men swiftly catching and flinging a white ball. Playing with perfect skill a simple and beautiful game. Darting like lightning across and along the floor of the great oblong hall.

And this was pelota.

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The Salon de Actualides is a quaint little theatre on the right hand side of the Calle de Alcala as you face towards the Plaza de Madrid. If you walk from the Puerta del Sol into the Calle de Alcala you will see it on

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your right before you have gone thirty yards. You can't miss it. There is always a noisy, laughing crowd outside the door. The performances begin in the daytime and go on till after midnight. Each performance lasts about three quarters of an hour.

This little theatre is worth entering. The roof is low and it is oblong in shape. The walls are covered with frescoes representing the gaiety and dissipation of a rapid life. But these you must not mind. You must go and sit down in one of the narrow wooden benches and wait to see what you will see.

The orchestra is composed of a free-and-easy pianist who talks and discusses with his friends between the turns. Sometimes he has a violinist to support him, but often as not he is alone. He is a hard worked man who takes it easy.

When you sit down and look around, you wonder why a theatre should be so small. It is probably the smallest theatre you were ever in. But wait. Here you see art.

The free-and-easy pianist gently begins work upon the piano and a little curtain goes up and discloses a little stage. And there comes on to the stage either a singer or a dancer or a comedian. Sometimes two people come on together. But whoever comes, comes to do good work. There is no slovenly work allowed at the Salon de Actualides.

I was there several times while I was in Madrid. I saw beautiful Andalusian women dancing a bolero, and I heard old race-songs of the South of Spain. At times little sketches were played which I did not understand, but the charm of the acting carried them off even to one

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PUERTA DEL SOL

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who did not know the language. I remember one little play or scene, however, which I did understand. The story was told in the action and the music. The scene was laid in the time of the old Moors. One of the girls in the harem of the Sultan's palace in the Alhambra was telling the other girls how she had been carried off from her home in the far off East and brought to the Alhambra for the Sultan. And the story went on to tell of how she at last began to love him and how in the end she saved his life from conspirators and was made his Sultana. The story was told through the music and gestures and dancing. Or rather that was the way I followed it. The music was of the time of the Moors, and the dancing was the slow, wonderful, voluptuous dancing of the East. And the girl who was telling the story on the little stage was very beautiful. A lustrous-eyed girl who perhaps had Arab blood in her. A girl of charm and life and soft fire. She illumined and made wonderful this strange little theatre. This Salon de Actualides. A beautiful girl. How fine it is to see a beautiful girl dancing. And above all dances how fine it is to see her in the slow, strange dance of the East. That dance is at once calm and full of a strange, mysterious voluptuousness.

* * * * *

I went into the Teatro de Apolo to see a play. It was a comedy, and though I could not follow the drift of the jokes I could see that one of the characters was intended to represent an Andalusian. The humour of the play was based upon the oddities of speech and character of the man of the south—as they were conceived to exist by the Madrileño.

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To the Madrileño the Andalusian is looked upon—for stage purposes at least—in much the same way as the Irishman is looked upon by the Englishman. The Andalusian is a mine of wealth for the Spanish maker of farces and comedies. The presenting of himself and his southern accent and his oddities upon the stage provokes the Madrileño to roars of laughter. The people of the capital feel the sense of superior wisdom and smartness that is the prerogative of the people of all capitals towards the rest of their respective countries.

A very red-faced, enormously-whiskered Englishman also figured in the comedy. But he only came to the fore now and then. His mission was usually to say something about "baño frio" (cold bath) or "agua frio" (cold water). But to tell the truth the Spaniards seemed tc look for the source and the reason of their laughter nearer home. The comic mainstay of the piece was the Andalusian.

I paid a visit to the Plaza de la Cebàda—a great covered-in market (mercado). The people here were much the same as market people the world over. They had the same colour and healthiness of appearance and a like manner. One might have been in a big market in England. The air was filled with the loud, ready, boisterous speech of the people who were selling. The only real difference was the language used.

Running off from the main market there were short streets crammed with people buying and selling. I wedged myself slowly through one—the Calle de la Ruda. In this street the sellers were all women. And the buyers were all women. I was at least a quarter of an hour

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A SENORA

A LADY OF SEVILLE

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getting through it, and I did not see a single man in it during the whole of the time. The noise was deafening. The women were nearly all selling vegetables. As worked myself along vegetables were thrust at me from all quarters and points. I seemed to live in the middle of an avalanche of tomatoes and turnips and carrots and onions and potatoes and strings of garlic, and other vegetables that I had never seen before. Every woman wanted to sell me a handful or a basketful at once.

"A perra chico! A perra chico! A perro grande! A perro grande! Mucha bueno! Mucha bueno! A perra chico!"

I was surrounded by the vegetables and by these cries as I wedged my forlorn and helpless way through the Calle de la Ruda, but at last I was through.

I found out afterwards that "a perra chico" (little dog) was the slang for five cèntimos, and that "a perro grande" (big dog) was the slang for ten cèntimos. This was told to me by a very clever and obliging commercial traveller named Storey. I believe he belonged to Yorkshire. To be quite frank the most agreeable Englishmen I met in Madrid were commercial travellers. They were intelligent, experienced, knowledgeable men of the world. How different they were to the well-off, shut-eyed boobies whose only real mission was to swell the gains of hotel-keepers and to follow couriers in a sheep-like manner! To talk to the commercial travellers was a pleasure. They were men of knowledge and account.

During my stay in Madrid my funds withered into nothingness and I was forced to have recourse to the pawnshop—the Monte de Piedad. For the benefit of any

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other traveller who may get into this awkward fix I may as well describe exactly where it is. For it is, of course, obvious that it is hardly the politic thing to ask the proprietor of the hotel where you are stopping as to its whereabouts. And it is hardly advisable to ask people in the street about it—especially if you know but little Spanish. I will be explicit.

To begin with, let us suppose that you are standing in the Puerto del Sol. In Madrid you can't miss the Puerta del Sol even if you tried. A babe would find it. Very well, then. You are in the Puerta del Sol. Good. Now look around till you have found the Calle de Alcala. It runs out of the Puerta del Sol and is to your right as you turn your face to the north. You will see the name of the calle for yourself. You have got there. Very well. Now turn your back to the Calle de Alcala and walk straight forward for about one hundred and fifty yards. You will now see before you a street called the Calle de Arenal. Enter it boldly and turn up the first turning on your right and very soon you will see to your left a plaza of moderate size. It is called the Plaza de las Descalzas, and there to your left and to your hand is a substantial, noble-looking edifice—No. 2. It is the State pawnshop—the Monte de Piedad. It is open from nine in the morning till twelve at night. You will see these hours marked, along with its name, on a big lamp outside the door. Be not afraid. Enter in. The officials are polite and kindly. Their manners are altogether different from their English brethren who condescend to lend money on gilt-edged security at a minimum rate of twenty-five per cent. for interest.

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Personally it took me a couple of hours to find the Monte de Piedad. I had to depend for my information as to its whereabouts from the casual passer-by, who in the majority of cases did not understand my badly put question. When they did chance to understand what I was trying to ask them they favoured me with voluble explanations and directions, which I, alas! found difficult to understand. And so I wandered here and there and around and about. How thankful I would have been for some exact information—in English.

At last, more by good luck than good management, I arrived at the pawnshop. I entered. It was a noble, lofty, vast place, and an official at the door piloted me through spacious rooms and corridors. I was much impressed. The Monte de Piedad was a palace of a place. It seemed big enough to hold all the valuables of the world.

The polite official brought me up to a desk which was presided over by another official who was—if possible—still more polite. He was the valuer, and he had a small pair of scales in front of him.

I produced what I wanted to pawn—a camera that I had bought in Gibraltar for two pounds ten. I opened and shut it and displayed its merits generally before the valuer. But he would have none of it. He was polite but stony. The camera was of no use to the Monte de Piedad.

I was beginning to think that fate had indeed laid me by the heels, when suddenly I thought of my revolver. I managed to ask him if he would take in a revolver. He told me that he would.

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So off I went to the hotel and got it. I was back again to the pawnshop within a quarter of an hour.

He examined the revolver with a skilled eye and then he said "seis" (six) pesetas. Six pesetas! It did not seem very much and I tried to raise the figure. I opened up the revolver and took out the cylinder and whirled it round on the pin and told him that I had given ciento (one hundred) pesetas for it in London. But it was no use. He was polite but inexorable. All he would give was six pesetas.

I handed over the revolver to him and he gave me a small metal check. This I took to another counter where I was given a large ticket elaborately and most beautifully engraved. It was about six inches long and four inches across. A most impressive affair. I would like to have kept it.

Whilst I was getting the ticket a difficulty occurred. I showed my passport and my name was taken. And then I was asked for my address (domicilio). I hardly liked to give the name of the hotel where I was staying, so I pretended not to understand. Again I was asked for my address. This time I turned and pointed in the direction of the Puerta del Sol and answered in English that I lived off over there. It worked like a charm. The man who was writing out the ticket looked puzzled and then muttered "no importe." And I was handed the ticket and shown to another counter where I got the six pesetas.

The next day the money that I was expecting came, and I went and redeemed the revolver. All I had to pay was five cèntimos (a halfpenny). If I had left the revolver

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there for a year I would have had to have paid no more. The Monte de Piedad charged no interest for small sums. I believe the five cèntimos was the charge for the ticket.

II

From the Plaza de Madrid and on towards the east the town is indeed beautiful. Great gardens and open spaces stretch out and around as far as the eye can see. From the Puerta del Sol and on to the west Madrid is just an ordinary collection of streets and plazas and buildings that are in no way picturesque, or, as I have suggested, typically Spanish. In one way, perhaps, Madrid is exceptional. The best part of the town is to the east rather than to the west.

Its climate is bad, though it lies well up above the level of the sea—over 2100 feet. The summers are scorching, and in the winter there are cold, treacherous winds. The air seems very clear and pure. But there is something wrong with it, or wrong with the location of Madrid. Every one, foreigners and natives, complain of the climate. Whilst I was there—a matter of three weeks—I felt very much off myself.

But there is one thing that Madrid possesses of which it may well be proud—the Prado. I think this must be the finest picture-gallery in the world. To my mind it is far past the Louvre in Paris. In the Louvre the pictures are set up too high and there are too many of them. And there is another fault about the Louvre that I suppose people of artistic souls never think of. The floor is most tiring to walk upon. What the French have done to it I

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don't know. But it is the worst and the slipperiest floor I have ever had the bad luck to walk upon. A couple of hours upon it is enough for a lifetime. Preserve me from the Louvre!

On the other hand, the Prado in Madrid is an ideal picture-gallery. The light is good and the pictures are nearly all set on a level with the eye. One does not have to strain one's neck in trying to see them. And there are not too many of them. This overcrowding of pictures into galleries does more to weary people with them than anything else.

The pictures I liked best in the Prado were the pictures by Velasquez. I can't say that I am much fascinated with pictures at all. Galleries, as a rule, are enough to make one fly from them, and artists usually have neither ideas nor power of execution. They are too fond of copying one another. Even the old masters appear to have been as skilful at this game as are the modern fellows who are always indulging in the study in the nude and the nook in Brittany business.

But I am bound to say that the pictures by Velasquez struck me as being great. I hope people won't think that I'm picking out a safe man and banking on him. As a matter of fact the paintings of Murillo and Raphael and Goya were in the Prado and I cared for none of them. I wouldn't go a yard to see any of them a second time. Murillo's work struck me as being wooden—having neither life nor subtlety. The only good picture I've seen of his is the picture in the cathedral of Seville. The pictures by Goya were too strenuous and too obvious. Also they were too highly coloured. They

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were not like nature. Raphael's pictures I didn't understand.

But the pictures by Velasquez interested and held me. They were out of life. They had the subtlety and the soul and the mystery and the actualness of life. There was a picture of his called "Esopo." It was the picture of an old man—a philosopher. The old man suggested the pictures one sees of Carlyle.

I never saw anything like it in my life. The picture had been painted hundreds of years before, and there was the old philosopher still living. It was as if Velasquez had caught life in some wonderful magic mirror. The eyes of the old man still gleamed with an acute, strange intelligence. It was, indeed, a great picture—or perhaps it was more than a picture.

I had been always under the impression that the pictures by Velasquez were difficult to understand—that he went in for obscure and complex effects. But what struck me about his work was its directness and its simplicity and its effect of absolute life. For me his work is worth far more than the work of all the artists that have ever lived. It is so great and so direct in its effect that any one could understand it.

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XIII.—THE WOMEN OF SPAIN

How beautiful are the women of Spain! There are no women in the world to compare with them. They contain within themselves the charm and wonder and magic and mystery of España. Golden women of a golden land. One hears men tell of their charms. These fine, supple, enchanting women. But to see them is to feel that no word of the traveller can fairly depict them.

A beautiful woman is a joy to all. She is as a sunset, as a flower, as something wonderful and strange and alluring.

One sees the Spanish women as they walk along the streets of the towns of this glowing, shining land. One sees them in the country parts and the villages. But more especially does one see them in Seville in Andalusia. Here the beauty of the woman of Spain ripens to absolute perfection. Delicious girls with dark hair and dark eyes, and girls with fair hair and blue eyes. Gloriously shaped girls going gracefully along. Girls with lustrous eyes and the faces of flowers.

The fine, supple, enchanting women of Spain. These women of magical and alluring beauty. These glowing, tender, passionate women full of life and fire. These daughters of the light of the sun.

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To the one who comes from the dark North, where the sun shines not, they are an alluring revealment.

Enchanting woman of Spain! One might well come from the farthest and darkest part of the world to listen to the soft, full music of the tones of your voice. To see you is a delight to the eye. You appeal strangely to the mind and to the senses.

Golden woman of a golden land.

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XIV.—ON THE ROAD TO ZARAGOZA

I

I PICKED up my knapsack and descended the stairs of the hotel into the hall. At once I was surrounded by waiters and porters and interpreters and boys and servants of all sorts and sizes and descriptions. I could feel their eyes all over me—concentrated, so to speak, into one intense gaze that was at once critical, expectant, and ingratiating. I could feel my measure being taken from crown to toe. For me it was a moment of anxious excitement. As I moved they moved. As I glanced they glanced. All I had in my pocket was two hundred pesetas (about six pounds). My funds had withered through gazing on the sights of Madrid. I grasped the two hundred pesetas firmly in my hand as it lay in my pocket, breathed hard, and tried to dodge. Useless. These hotel servants of sunny Spain knew a thing or two. They were before me and behind me and around me, and at one stage of the game I was afraid that they would down me and take the two hundred pesetas from me. But at last I escaped—escaped with only a loss of twenty-five pesetas.

Here I was standing outside the hotel in the Calle de Alcala. I was slowly recovering from the scrimmage I

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had had with the servants who would be tipped. I was just beginning to realise that I was lucky to have got out of the hotel with any money at all.

After fortifying myself with a very strong drink in the café next door to the hotel I again found myself in the Calle de Alcala—thinking. But in a moment I was myself again, and I turned to the right and moved slowly along—knapsack in hand.

It was light, this knapsack, for I had left everything behind me in the hotel that was not absolutely necessary for me to carry. I had a long tramp before me, and the having to carry everything on my back chastened my requirements as to luggage.

There were a great many people in the street, for it was Sunday, and Sunday in Madrid is really a holiday—a day of rejoicing. And, moreover, that afternoon there was to be a bull-fight in the Plaza de Toros. The great matador, Luis Mazzantini, was to show his power with the sword in the killing of bulls.

Here I was up to the Plaza de Madrid, and I turned round for one last look towards the Puerta del Sol. Perhaps I would never see it again.

Madrid itself looked so fresh and beautiful and full of light. The sun was shining with a wonderful brightness. It was the beginning of October, and the deadly heat had gone from it. But still it shone with a strange, illuminating brilliance. Shone in a way that it never shines in England.

I was now in the Plaza de la Independencia, and stretching out before me were parks and gardens—and palaces in the distance. At this moment of brilliant sun-

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shine—illumining distant palaces and open plazas, and soft greenness of park and garden, and noble public statuary —Madrid appeared to me to be the most beautiful city I had ever seen.

At last I could see the great, sullen roundness of the bull-ring to my right, and soon after that I was out of the city and at the Ventas del Espiritu Santo. Madrid was behind me.

Once more I was on the road. My destination was Zaragoza (Saragossa), which lay three hundred and twenty-three kilòmetros to the north-east. I had tried to find out something of the nature of the country through which I had to pass, but no one seemed to know anything about it. I had met no one who had ever travelled by road through the country. The only man whose knowledge promised to be of any value was an Englishman who had lived for a long time in Madrid. But he turned out to be a person gifted with imagination. He told me of a Spaniard who lived in the Calle de Arenal, and who sold bicycles to bicyclists. The Englishman averred that this Spaniard knew every twist and turn and quip, so to speak, of the road going up north. But the Spaniard was only a polite tradesman who knew nothing further than the fact that the road to Guadalajara went out past the bull-ring. This interesting fact I knew myself, and after gleaning it for the second time I departed in search of a road map. But in vain. There was none to be had. No one knew anything about anything concerning the road going from Madrid to Zaragoza. No one knew anything even about the distance between the two places. I had to find that out for myself in the fulness of time. At last,

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in despair, I went and got a railway map—for a railway did run to Zaragoza. But a railway map is a fearful and wonderful thing. It is built expressly for the eye. I was forced in the end to fall back on an ordinary map of Spain —published in Paris—which told me nothing further than that Zaragoza lay to the north-east, and that before I got there I would have to negotiate many mountain chains.

I was, therefore, walking along the road armed with information of the vaguest and slightest kind. I had not the remotest idea of what was before me. All that I really knew was that it was a beautiful day, and that I was walking through the province of Castile, in Spain.

Here was a pueblo (village) called Canillejos. I had been walking now for about two hours, and was feeling in a little better form than when I had started. I had strapped my knapsack up on to my back and was beginning to feel comfortable.

In the pueblo men were engaged building a house. I stopped to look at them. It seemed rather rough on them to have to work on a Sunday. But they were not hurting themselves. They were going about it very easy —giving the bricks and stones and mortar time to set. It would be a good house when it was built.

I went up to a Guardia Civil, who was leaning up against a wall thoughtfully smoking a cigarette, and I managed to ask him, after some labour, the distance to Torrejòn de Ardoz. I had found out that it was on the road along which I was going, and its being marked on the map showed that it was a place of some size. The Guardia Civil informed me that it was doce (twelve)

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kilòmetros from where we were—Canillejos—and after giving him a cigarette I passed on.

Gradually I entered on to a great plain that was bounded on either side by mountains. The mountains showed dim and blue in the distance. On the road before me lay Torrejòn de Ardos. The air was so clear that it seemed as if I were away from it but a couple of kilòmetros. I could make out the houses and a church and a tower with great distinctness. It looked but a couple of kilòmetros away, but I knew it must be nine or ten by a cart that was coming along the road towards me. The town was as clear to see as was the cart, but I calculated by objects in between that it must be something over four times as far away. There was something strange-looking about the town. It seemed to rise right up over the plain.

By this time I was feeling rather hungry and I turned into a ventorro (inn) that lay along the road. No one seemed to be around. I clapped my hands again and again, and at last a big dog came to the front of the inn and began to bark loudly. I cracked my làtigo at the dog and he made off. And then an old woman appeared behind the little bar of the ventorro. She came so quietly and so suddenly that she startled me. An old woman with a keen, sallow-coloured face.

"Vino?" I asked.

"Si," she answered, as she put a jar of wine on the counter. "Que cuanto?" (How much?)

For answer I put a ten-cèntimo piece on the bar, and she filled me up a jug which contained about a pint of wine. A pint of wine for less than a penny! It was cheap.

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"ON THE ROAD BEFORE ME LAY TORREJON DE ARDOZ"

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The wine was good and I called for another pint. And then I thought about something to eat. But when I asked the old woman in my clipped, halting Spanish about food, she did not seem to understand. Again and again I approached the subject, helping out my words with appropriate, primitive gestures. But it was of no use. And in the end I sat down with the idea in my mind that the keen-faced old woman knew what I was driving at the whole time, but for some reason or another she did not want to get me the food. I would have to wait till I came to another ventorro, or till I got to Torrejòn de Ardoz.

I ordered another jug of wine—wine was much better than nothing—and then I began to meditate about the wonders of Spain. What a fine thing it was to be here in Castile, the home of sunshine and chivalry and legend and glowing romance. This ventorro was so picturesque and strange. It might have been here at the time of the Moors. How wonderful everything was. But—well, how was I going to get some grub? This thought suddenly knocked the poetry out of my imaginings. I stood up and again approached the food problem. The eyes of the old Spanish woman twinkled.

I was in the middle of the history of my wants when a loud, harsh voice came forth from the interior of the ventorro. A man appeared—a bow-legged, square-set man. He turned out to be Ezekiel, the proprietor of the ventorro. His voice was harsh and his face was harsh, but he became amiable when I told him of the "gran corrida" (great bull-fight) I had seen in Madrid, with Luis Mazzantini as principal matador. I had hit upon a

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topic at once safe and productive, for I was soon enjoying a meal of huevos (eggs), sardines, bread, and onions.

Once more I was on the road going to Torrejòn. This time I was going at a sharp, swinging pace. I was feeling at peace with the world in general.

The sun was going down as I got into the town, and I turned into the first posada I came to—the Parador del Cristo. I was asked a number of questions which I did not understand by a young man who was attired in a picturesque costume. He turned out to be the son of the señora who kept the posada, and the reason of his picturesqueness of attire was because there was a feast going on—the festa "Nuestro Señora del Rosario." A good many people were in the covered-in yard of the posada. They had come from the outlying district so as to take part in the festa. Nearly all of them were gaily attired—men, women, and children. They gathered about me whilst the young man—the son of the proprietress—was asking me the questions.

I told them that I had come afoot from Madrid and that I was going afoot to Guadalajara, and after that to Zaragoza.

That night I went out to have a look round the town in company with Antonio, a grabador (engraver). He was a small, slight young fellow, not at all like a Castilian, and he seemed to take an interest in me. We went together down the main street towards the plaza, from whence was coming the sound of singing and the playing of instruments.

The plaza was a blaze of light, and from out of it there was coming a procession of men, women, and

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children, who were singing and carrying candles and torches. In the deep shadow outside the immense blaze of light stood the church. "Ora pro nobis. Ora pro nobis." The mingled voices of the men, women, and children singing the litany swelled up in the blaze of light in the plaza and swelled out and around and out and around and into the darkness. And chanting priests headed the procession. Just behind them came the figure "Nuestro Señora del Rosario" (Our Lady of the Rosary). It was raised high up aloft over the heads of the people, supported on a structure carried by four men. The priests were swinging censers as they marched slowly along, chanting. "Ora pro nobis." The Latin words came forth solemnly. And out and out of the plaza the people went. Antonio and I joined the end of the procession and went along with heads uncovered. I turned and looked round. And there was the plaza in silence and darkness. It had been one great blaze of light when I had seen it first, but now it was dark and silent as the grave. "Ora pro nobis." The words were swelling out solemnly before us as we went slowly along. The deep voices of the priests and the men mingled with the voices of the women and the voices of the children. And over all was the great light from the hundreds of candles and torches. A light that moved and cast shadows strangely and still was one great, soft blaze, in the midst of which was the figure "Nuestro Señora del Rosario." Slowly the procession wound round Torrejòn, till at last it came back to the plaza and gradually made it again one blaze of light. All the time the voices were singing. "Ora pro nobis." And then

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the procession went towards the old church that lay in the deep shadow. And now the church was one great blaze of light. And a priest clad in vestments mounted the steps to an altar, shining in the light, and began again the chant, and the whole people chanted in response.

II

I liked Antonio, the grabador. We were sitting by the wood fire that night in the posada, trying to talk together. We were as opposite as men could be, opposite in race and in every way, but still we were trying to talk together. There was some sympathetic chord between us.

He was asking me what sort of a place London was, and I was trying as well as I could to give him some idea of it. If I understood him aright he was also saying that he would like to go there and work as a grabador.

It is curious how men can sometimes exchange ideas, even when they speak a different language. It must depend upon some consonance of temperament. Although I could not follow Antonio's words I knew what was in his mind. And I think he could follow me in the same sort of way.

At last the fire in the great hearth got low and we went off to the part of the posada where the people slept. It was in the covered-in yard where I had stood first when the son of the señora who kept the place had been asking me questions. It presented an odd sight as Antonio and I went in. It was lit up by three or four long candles, and men, women, and children were sleeping in it together. They slept in their clothes on separate

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piles of twigs or rushes. Here in the dim light was to be seen a child—here a man—here a woman. Some had blankets—some had not. My pile of twigs or rushes was next to Antonio's. It was primitive, but I didn't mind. I had knocked around too much and seen too much to mind a little roughing it, so I lay down, put my knapsack under my head, and wrapped myself in the blanket that the señora had provided. Soon I was asleep.

I was awakened next morning by the stamping and the noise of the mules who were occupying what might be called an extension of our sleeping compartment. I rubbed my eyes and looked round. Daylight was just coming in. I could see it through a chink at the top of the big door. A candle was still burning.

As no one seemed to be stirring, I turned round and fell asleep again. When I woke up again I found that they had all gone. I got up and went into the place where the fire was. Antonio was there drinking coffee. The señora who kept the posada was also there. She was having a stiff argument with a woman who was cooking at the fire as to how much the woman owed her. It was concerning a difference of cinco (five) cèntimos. The woman who was cooking won.

Antonio was very friendly, and asked me to share his coffee with him. It seemed that there was something special on that morning—the nature of which I could not quite understand—and he had to get out quickly. When he was gone I spoke to the señora about getting breakfast, but there was a deadlock somewhere. It took me nearly half an hour before I made her understand that I wanted breakfast.

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After I had breakfast I paid the score—three pesetas—and got my knapsack up on to my back. My intention was to make Guadalajara that day—a distance of thirty-six kilòmetros. But just as I was going out of the door, after bidding farewell to the señora and her son, I heard some one across the street shouting "toros," and I saw several people running along in the direction of the plaza. I asked what was the matter, and the reply I got gave me to understand that there was to be a corrida (bull-fight) that day, and that the bulls were just being brought in to Torrejòn.

I left my knapsack in the posada and hastened down to the plaza, but when I got there I found that the bulls had been taken off to the campo (field). People were going in the direction where they were, and I joined in with them. I was anxious to see how the bulls looked when they were not fighting in the circus.

There they were, about half a mile away, grazing peaceably. Quiet, black, powerful animals. It was almost difficult to believe that they were of the same breed of bulls that I had seen fighting terribly in Seville and Madrid. People were standing close enough to them to touch them.

I came back to the plaza and made inquiries as to what time the bull-fight was to begin. I was told four o'clock. Workmen were now erecting a barricade around the plaza. There was no regular bull-ring in Torrejòn, and the bull-fight was to take place there. Trees were here and there in the plaza, and I wondered how the picadors would manage to escape being unhorsed in the rush of the fight. I tried to get information as to this from a Spaniard

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who was directing the erection of the barricade. But he was unable to enlighten me on the subject. The danger of having a bull-fight in a plaza wherein there were trees had never occurred to him. He was not a picador.

In the main street leading from the plaza there were stalls whereat vendors of all sorts of things were calling out the merits of their wares. And here it was that I came upon Antonio, the grabador. He was sitting down at a little low stall, with his engraving tools before him. The reason of his hurry to get out of the posada that morning was now plain. He had been anxious to get a place as near to the actual bull-ring as possible.

We shook hands and I tried to find out what he was going to engrave. But his explanation was not very clear to me. The noise the vendors were making was confusing. It seemed to me that he was saying something about engraving names on rings.

The plaza was now filling up again with the people who were coming back from the campo after having seen the bulls. They just slipped in under the partially-made barricade—men, women, and children. And a band began to play from a terrace at the end of the plaza and they began to dance. The men wore flat cloth caps shaped like tam-o'-shanters, the women wore mantillas and had their hair done up in the usual fashion, and the children were dressed anyhow. All were dancing. The sounds from the hammers of the workmen broke into the music, but no one took any notice. They danced on and on. A curious sort of dance with a waltz step. Parties of four danced together. They bowed and figured, and then whirled round and round without touching each

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other—their arms held up high. And all the while the workmen were hammering away at the barricade and swinging big timbers and logs into place, and hauling up heavy waggons to buttress and strengthen the structure.

For a maddened bull would rush with frightful power. A maddened bull breaking the barricade would mean death to those within reach. And so the barricade was to be made tight and safe and strong. And here were the workmen hammering and hauling, and shifting and swinging and placing while the band played and the people danced.

I went back to the posada, and at four o'clock I was back again at the plaza. The barricade was up now and the stands behind it were filled with people shouting. I climbed up into a stand and looked down. About fifty men and boys were running here and there and around in the enclosed space. They were baiting and plaguing a very young bull. When I had heard the shouts of the people as I was coming from the posada I had thought that the bull-fight had begun.

I turned to a man who was standing next to me.

"Porque no corrida, señor?" (Why no bull-fight, sir?) I asked.

"Ah!" he answered, "corrida mañana, señor."

So the bull-fight was not to be to-day after all! It was to be to-morrow! I had misunderstood what I had been told in the posada. That was the worst of only knowing a word or two of a language.

I came down from the barricade—made for the posada—and in a few moments I had my knapsack once more on my back and was tramping at a good pace towards Alcalà

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de Henares, the next town on the line of march. It was only ten kilòmetros off, and I had been told that it was a big town of more than twenty thousand inhabitants. As I went along I could still hear the shouts of the people in Torrejòn. They were enjoying the baiting of the young bull. I would like to have seen a bull-fight in the plaza, for I [illegible] anxious to know how the picadores were going to negotiate the trees in the plaza when the fighting was going fast. I had seen a fight in Seville and a fight in Madrid, but this idea of having trees in an arena was original. However, I did not care to lose a day waiting for it. [illegible] wanted to push on to Guadalajara.

I had been hardly half an hour on the road when it began to rain. It was the first rain that I had been in since I had come to Spain. I thought at first that it might soon pass off, but I was mistaken. It got steadier and heavier. There was no wind blowing and it fell down straight. I saw that I was in for a drenching. There would be no bull-fight the next day in Torrejòn if it kept on. Had I waited I would likely enough have had the wait for nothing. I could have kept dry, of course, but then I was not made of salt. And I wanted to push on. The tramp's instinct to move was upon me.

The country lying in the direction of Alcalà de Henares was just like the country through which I had walked when going to Torrejòn. Had the day been fine I would have been able to have seen it in the distance before me. But as it was there was nothing to be seen but the surrounding greyness and the steady, drenching rain.

I was soon wet through, but kept on, on, till I saw some building emerging out of a mist. It was Alcalà de

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Henares. I would go no farther that day. It would surely have a good hotel where I could stop and rest and dry myself out generally.

The entrance into the town was through a great gate. But I was stopped just as I was passing quickly in by two armed guards, and requested politely to come into an office that lay to the left of the gate. Here my knapsack was examined with care. They wanted to see if I were carrying anything into the town upon which they could claim a duty. In Spain there is a Customs-house office in every town. Even provisions can't go from one place to the other without paying duty.

In this office I was apprised of the fact that Alcalà de Henares was the birthplace of Cervantes. The man who went through my knapsack told me this, I suppose, to cheer up my spirits.

I was very wet and feeling very pessimistic about things in general, and it may have been that the information imparted by the guard had not quite the stimulating effect he seemed to think it ought to have. I would have preferred a drink of whisky to tomes of such information. He told me about Cervantes three times. And had I been gifted with a flow of Spanish I would have put to him with vividness my indifference as to the matter. After he had rubbed the information in he told me proudly that Alcalà de Henares was a town of twenty-four thousand inhabitants, and that it was in every way superior to Madrid. I was really glad to hear this. There would probably be a good hotel in it.

But he was a good sort of fellow, this guard, even though he was afflicted with a mania for imparting infor-

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mation, for he piloted me through the streets to the Fonda Hidalgo. He still kept telling me things as I walked by his side through the rain. When we got to the fonda I offered him a peseta, which he wouldn't take.

In the Fonda Hidalgo I was received most cordially. The landlord, a big, strapping Castilian, shook me warmly by the hand. But, nevertheless, I took the precaution of asking him what the tariff was. One learns to do that sort of thing in a town in Spain. It is less apt to lead to argument when you get your bill on leaving.

Five pesetas a day! Everything was all right.

The waiter then came forward and I asked him to get me a drink of whisky. But whisky never seemed even to have been heard of in Alcalà de Henares. The waiter, who turned out to be a travelled man, said that when he was a soldier in Havana he had once taken a drink of it. But Havana was a long way off. The landlord had never heard of it.

Rhum! That was what they had. Plenty of it! And soon I was enjoying a great drink of rum and hot coffee sweetened with sugar. The world was not such a bad place after all, and Spain was beginning to recover for me its romance.

It turned out that the waiter had been a soldier in the Philippines. And we conversed in a zigzag, broken sort of fashion about America.

But he was a native, he told me, of Alcalà de Henares. Alcalà was a place mucha grande! A place more grand even than Madrid. I pricked up my ears. And then what I half expected came out. Alcalà de Henares was the place where Cervantes was born!

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I would have succumbed but for the fact that I was fortified with the big drink I had had of the rum and coffee. However, I let the waiter ramble on, and in time I got used to it. His way was to begin about something concerning the Philippines, he would then glide on to the merits of Alcalà de Henares as a town, and he would finish with the information concerning Cervantes. After that he would begin all over again.

However, his wanderings were turned to some purpose as far as I was concerned, for he got the cook to grill a steak for me in a proper manner. It was the first and only good steak I ever had in Spain. "Ah," he said, as he brought it up to the table, "estaka Inglès." He may have been at some time or another in England—though he said nothing about it.

By this time I was dry and feeling comfortable. I carried a change of underclothing wrapped in a strong oil-paper in my knapsack. This I had put on, and my coat and shoes were drying in the kitchen before the wood fire. The Fonda Hidalgo was a free and easy hotel.

All the while I was eating the waiter stood by my side and watched me carefully. He seemed to take a fancy to me. His curiosity was of the unadulterated order. There was nothing in it, however, that was in the least way irritating. He was anxious to attend to all my wants.

After I had finished eating the landlord came up and talked for a while. And it was then that I was forced to the conclusion that the people of Alcalà de Henares were a fine, decent lot, but that they rather overworked the Cervantes business.

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III

I started out the next morning for Guadalajara. It was still raining, but I had provided myself with an umbrella, for which I paid eight pesetas at a shop just across the street from the fonda.

Twenty-six kilòmetros lay between me and Guadalajara, the capital of the province. After walking fifteen kilometros it suddenly cleared up beautifully. The sunlight lit up the great plain wonderfully.

I was still walking over the plain upon which I had entered after leaving Canillejos, eight kilòmetros from Madrid. I could see far ahead of me a great mountain-chain running right across the horizon. When I turned and looked back I could see the towers and the houses of Alcalà de Henares standing out clearly over the great plain.

The plain was breaking up. I was entering the low foot-hills that lay at the base of the mountain chain. It was about four in the afternoon. I had met hardly any one since I had left Alcalà de Henares.

The road now turned sharply to the right, and I walked up a winding, steep incline, crossed a river, and found myself in Guadalajara.

IV

That night in Guadalajara I sat down to dinner with three Spanish officers and two priests. It was at the Fonda Espanola, where I had been welcomed with what might be called comparative enthusiasm. I had found it

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rather a hard job getting accommodation in Guadalajara. The people of the first fonda into which I went did not seem to be at all impressed with my appearance. I suppose I wore a trampish air—a come-day go-day-God-send-some-day sort of air. The man who kept the fonda looked me up and down and seemed to take my measure from many view-points. Then after a pause—laden with the ripest significance—he let me know that the fonda was full. I came sadly away after running the gauntlet of the eyes of himself and his wife, and what appeared to be his daughter, and a squat-looking waiter. I suppose that to them I lacked distinction of look. And so I wandered through the up-and-down and this-way and that-way streets of Guadalajara till I arrived at another fonda. Here as before my luck deserted me the moment I got inside the door. The fonda was full, said the landlord, after the searching look, and the pause—the pause laden with ripe significance. Around and around I wandered, till I met a young man who piloted me to the Fonda Española. Here the scene was changed. The propietario of the fonda and his wife welcomed me with such effusion—when compared with the way that I had been welcomed at the other places—that I was frozen with the horrible thought that perhaps the effusion would figure with largeness in the bill. But such turned out not to be the case. They were simply kindly Spanish people who seemed to be captured with my mud-splashed appearance. And so I slipped off my knapsack—forbore to ask what the tariff was—explained that I was an Englishman of much importance—and asked to be shown to a room. And very soon I was seated at dinner with the three Spanish officers and the two priests.

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The room was long and rather low and lit up with big hanging oil-lamps. The food was food that I hardly understood—but it was good food. And the wine was excellent. It was a claret—a full-bodied claret—and it was there before you on the table to take as much as you wanted.

I liked the priests much better than I did the officers. The officers had the air of carrying the earth on their shoulders—the air that belongs the world over to gentlemen of the military persuasion. I could not make out the regiment they belonged to. At first I was under the impression that they belonged to the band, because of the fact that the sleeves of their uniforms were adorned with trumpets worked out in gold lace. But they were neither trumpeters nor bandsmen. Their carrying-the-earth-on-their-shoulders air forbade so lowering an assumption as this. And after dinner the propietario told me that they were the officers of a crack Spanish regiment.

The priests had the look of jovial, jolly, easy men of the world. They slapped the officers on the backs, and laughed and joked and made things hum. And one of them began to ask me questions. He was a man of about thirty-five, with a round, red face and clever, shrewd eyes. I answered his questions as well as I could, and then I asked him what sort of a country it was between Guadalajara and Zaragoza. He explained at some length, but the only part of the explanation that I grasped was that the country was mountainous. He seemed surprised when I told him that I was going to walk there. I would have to pass through many mountains (muchos montes), he said. And then one of the officers asked me—or I think he

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asked me—why I was going a piè (on foot) through the country. He seemed to get rather vexed at the answer I gave him, but the priest with the round, red face said something to him that soothed him. An argument now ensued as to England and her methods of extending her Empire. And Chamberlain's genius as a diplomat came into question. "Diplomatico siniestro!" ejaculated the priest. And the officer, who a moment before had got rather vexed, looked at me hard and asked me something concerning our great statesman. But I shrugged my shoulders and looked blank. "No entender" (I don't understand), I said. And after that the topic veered round to the safer one of bull-fighting. Here I came in a little. My knowledge of, and enthusiasm for, the sport won for me the good graces of the officer, who had seemed inclined to carp at me whenever he got the chance. His eye now beamed upon me with fraternity.

After dinner I went out to have a look round the town. I turned to the left and walked up a narrow street that led through an arch into a wide plaza. The plaza was well lit up and filled with a crowd, composed nearly all of men.

These men of Guadalajara! They were as fine a looking lot of fellows as I ever saw in my life. They were very different from the people of Andalusia, and, indeed, different from the people of Madrid. Powerful, middle-sized, dark fellows with broad, rather hard faces—as a rule. Broad-headed men of the absolute fighting type. They suggested the Scotch, and still they were not like them. Neither were they like the Irish. Their gestures were abrupt and their voices were deep. Square,

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strong, well-set men. It struck me that the country that could produce such men was in no sense one of the "dying nations."

The next day I went on my way to Brihuega, after bidding good-bye to the people at the Fonda Española. Brihuega was thirty-six kilòmetros from Guadalajara, and my intention was to make it that night. But luck was against me. It came on to rain again. And the wind blew it steadily in my face for hours. There is nothing so bad for making time in walking as facing a steady rain-laden wind.

When the afternoon came I saw that it would be impossible for me to make Brihuega that day, and I concluded that I would put up at the posada of the first fair-sized village I came to. It was not that I was tired or fagged. It was rather that the day had dispirited me. It was a dull, wet, heavy, darkish day such as one would never expect to find in a country like Spain.

At last after I had walked eighteen kilòmetros, the road took a sudden bend around a great high mass of rock and before me was a village. To the right of it was a most wonderful ruin of a Moorish castle. It was strange that I had not noticed it when coming along the road. But the wind had been driving the rain into my face steadily for hours.

A grand, high, strange-looking Moorish castle. It stood before me hewn out of grey stone. The greyness of the day and the rain and the wind added to its effect. It was as high and as massive-looking as a cathedral. And it had the nobility and grandeur of look of a cathedral. It was there—something Moorish, something

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Arabic, something Eastern. There on a grey day in the midst of the rain and the wind. Its lines had the power and the freedom and the strength of Gothic lines and still there was in it the subtlety and the strangeness and the mystery of the East. I had seen nothing that could be at all compared with it in the Alhambra—nothing that possessed either its magnificence, its beauty, or its meaning. The Alhambra was but a place of effeminate marble pillars and courts and baths and gardens. But this ruin was of a time when the Moors were men—when they were strong in the land. It was a castle, simple, splendid, and strange. And it was here in a place of three hundred souls—a place called Torija—a place not even on the map of Spain.

To the side of it stood the village. It was also in grey stone. But the meaning of the village was not as the meaning of the strange, wonderful castle. The castle told of another time, another life, another race. And still it was of the place and of the scene as the village was of the place and of the scene. It was here in the greyness of the day—and the rain and the wind.

I went to the posada in the village. It was a weird, dark-looking place in the middle of the narrow street of the village, and was called the Posada Anastasio, after the man who owned it. Anastasio was a gnarled-looking old Spaniard of over seventy. He had a curious habit of continually turning his head to look behind him.

His wife was about as old as he was. But she was a stronger character and had a better grasp of the powers of her mind. Anastasio's attention wandered quickly from one thing to another. He was really old.

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A fire was soon blazing in the chief room of the posada. I was sitting there with Anastasio and his wife. She was asking me the usual questions :—where had I come from, where was I going to, and who was I? I was answering her questions and wishing that I was anywhere else than in the posada. The old man's habit of continually looking round had got on my nerves. And I was thinking of the sullen expression that I had seen on the faces of the men that I had seen standing about in the narrow street of the village as I was coming up to the posada. They were fine-looking men. But they looked sullen. And it all at once occurred to me that the people of Castile looked sullen generally. Whilst I admired them I could not say that I liked them—as I did the Andalusians.

The room of the posada was gloomy-looking and weird. There were black-looking objects hanging from the roof. They might have been wine-skins, but I was unable to make out their shapes in the gloom. The strong light of the fire threw them into a deep, almost black, shadow. And a sudden resolution came to me. I would leave the posada and walk on to the next village!

I could see that it was still daylight through the narrow chink at the top of the chimney. I would still have time enough to get from the village well out on to the road. After that it did not matter much. The road was good. I could find my way along it even in the darkness.

I picked up my knapsack and asked how much I owed for the jug of Argando that I had just finished. But the old woman would not hear of my going. It was

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dark—I would lose my way—many things might happen. I was not to go!

Anastasio said nothing. He did not seem to care in the least whether I went or stayed. And this attitude of his finally made me decide to stay. After all there was no good reason for my nervousness. I was well able to look out for myself. But still, knocking round the world amongst all sorts of people had put caution into me.

I had learned from hard experience that craft and caution, combined with a little bravery at the right moment, make together the finest armour that a man in danger can possess. Men who are in the habit of rushing point-blank at danger usually do it through cowardice. They are afraid of being thought afraid. And even if they have got the straight, real stuff in them they are not effective fighters. A dead man is but a dead man. It is the man who outlives the fight who counts. No, there is the time to retreat and the time to advance—just as in sword-play. And there is the time to be afraid—to run away. The man who wins is the man who wins.

Things now wore a cheerier aspect in the posada and I was feeling better. The Argando was mellowing me up and taking the pessimism out of me. It was a good wine—better even than the wine I had had the night before at the Fonda Española in Guadalajara. The company, of course, was not quite so lively, but I suppose it was as good as could be got in Torija. Anastasio's two sons were now seated before the fire. They were two powerfully-built young men with the sullen underlook in their faces that seemed to belong especially to the men of the village.

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"THE OLD MAN'S HABIT OF CONTINUALLY LOOKING ROUND HAD GOT ON MY NERVES"

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Anastasio had improved considerably under the genial influence of his own Argando. His mind had stopped wandering and he was telling me all about the posada. He said it was more than five hundred years old. It looked it.

I tried to find out something about the Moorish castle. "Ah!" said Anastasio. "La Castillo Moro." But his tone was the tone of one who was touching a subject that did not interest him. He could tell me nothing of it—save that it was old. Was it older than the posada? I asked. Yes, it was older than the posada, he told me, after a pause. But it was in no way so remarkable—at least not to him—for he went on to tell me at length again about the posada. He was human, was old Anastasio.

At last the time came for us to retire, and I was offered my choice either of having a bed or of sleeping on the bench by the fire. I chose the bed, because I thought it would be the safest in the event of anything out of the way happening. Whilst we were all in a pleasant humour by this time I still thought it as well to keep my weather eye open.

Anastasio got up slowly from where he was sitting and lit a small oil lamp. It was made of tin, and the wick came up through its spout. I had seen such lamps stuck in men's hats when years before I had been working in the heading of an underground tunnel. They were worn by the men who ran the machines for the drilling of blasting holes in the solid rock.

The old man slowly led the way out of the room. I followed him with my knapsack in my hand. I was

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wondering slightly as to what part of the posada he was going to take me to.

The blare from the naked light of the lamp revealed a flight of stone steps. I followed Anastasio down them, and we stood in what seemed to be the cellar of the posada. Anastasio held the light high over his head and waved it round as if to show me the size of the place. It was a huge cellar, and had a door in each of its four walls. In the centre of it was a strong pillar, on the top of which rested supports for the roof.

Anastasio led me through one of the doors, and I found myself in a still larger cellar. Off in a corner of it was a heap of grain. We crossed the floor of this and Anastasio led me through another door. At this I began to get nervous. The cellar that I found myself in now was circular, and was lower in the roof than the other cellars. He went across this and opened the door that led into the room where I was to sleep for the night.

"Buenas noches" (good night), he said, as he set the lamp down on a small table that stood close to the bed.

He turned and left me, and I could hear him going slowly across the floor of the circular cellar—opening the door—and then going slowly across the floor of the large cellar. Then the sound of his footsteps stopped suddenly. I wondered why. He had still another cellar to cross before he came to the foot of the flight of stone steps that led up into the chief room of the posada. His steps had sounded out so distinctly, and then they had stopped suddenly. I wondered what could be the meaning of it. But it might have been my fancy. The posada had made me nervous. The chief room of it seemed to be but the entrance to a

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labyrinth of dungeon-like cellars opening one into the other. What could be the size of the place in all—the place where I was—the place underground? In the first cellar I had noticed a door in each of the walls. They must have opened into underground places which went off in other directions. I wondered what was the reason of it all. Why was the posada of such a curious construction? I could not help feeling nervous. How easy it would be to kill a man in a place like this! I was sorry now that I had stopped in Torija at all. I should have left the posada that time at the fire when the impulse to leave it had come upon me. It would have been better to have gone along the road in the darkness and in the rain than to have stopped in a place such as this. A strong, dark place in which hung an atmosphere sinister and evil.

The room in which I was now was rather small. And the roof was lower even than the roof of the circular cellar. I could almost touch with my hand the big single rafter that ran right across the roof. There was no window in it.

I turned and examined the door. It had no lock. All that there was was a latch. The door could be opened as easily from the outside as it could from the inside.

I pulled down the coverlet of the bed. The sheets were very damp. It had evidently been a long time since any one had slept in it. I would have done much better to have slept in my clothes by the side of the fire. The frame and headboard of the bed were made of dark wood. It looked as old as the posada itself.

I pushed the bed over to the end of the wall that

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fronted the door. Then I laid the table lengthwise on the floor between the head of the bed and the door. My object was to make it impossible for any one to come in without smashing the door. But the table was not long enough. The door could still be opened wide enough for a man to get in. I was at a loss what to do. But at last I thought of the plan of shoving the head of the bed right up against the door. I was safe now as far as being surprised in my sleep was concerned. If any one came I would at least have a run for my money. There might, of course, be other ways of getting in on me than by the way of the door. But I had done all I was able to do.

Then I took the cartridges out of my revolver and snapped it several times to see if the cylinder revolved easily. I was afraid that it might have got wet in my pocket as I was walking along from Guadalajara. It was all right, and I put the cartridges back and lay down on the bed without taking off my clothes. I would just as soon have thought of sleeping out in the rain as of getting between the damp sheets. Of the two the rain would have been the least dangerous.

When I blew out the light the darkness actually seemed to press down upon me. But I was not quite so nervous now as I had been before. I lay with my feet towards the door. The fact of having the head of the bed jammed up against it reassured me. A man need never feel nervous if circumstance deals him out anything of a hand. It would be my own fault, I reflected, if anything happened and I muddled things up.

But the darkness began to bother me. And I got up and groped towards the table for the little lamp. I found

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it and lit it. Had there been a window in the room I would not have minded it so much. But one felt that this dungeon-like room was always dark—dark even in the middle of the day when the sun was shining. And the air was damp and heavy—the air that belongs to a place that never sees the sun.

I was lying on the bed again watching the flame that came from the lamp. There was not much oil in it. It was getting lower. And soon it was out and the darkness was on me again.

I lay with wide open eyes.

In the densest kind of darkness there is a curious, faint suggestion of greyness. Why this should be, I don't know. But I have noticed it. The darkness of the darkest night is not as the darkness of a mine—of a place down beneath the earth. I have been in darkness in a place far down beneath the earth, and it seemed to me that there was around me a greyness—a threatening greyness that surrounded and enclosed and in the end made one afraid.

Such was the darkness that was here in this room beneath the posada. Had any one knocked suddenly on the door I would have felt relief. I would have felt relief had the door been suddenly smashed. I was in no way nervous now about men. Men I could deal with.

Light came. The room was filled with it. I wondered how it had come to pass that I had thought that the room was as dark as the dark cell of a prison. The light was streaming in through a window to the right of my bed. Either I was dreaming or I was mad. I got up from the bed. I was not dreaming. There was my revolver. It

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had been lying close to my hand. I picked it up, pressed down on the thumb-piece, and opened up the cylinder to see if the cartridges were all right. They were there—six of them. No, I was surely not dreaming. Perhaps I had been dreaming, and the daylight had come and the cover of the window had been taken off from the outside. But the night before I had seen no sign of a window. I got up off the bed and went over to it. But just as I put my hand on the frame darkness came down upon me.

I was lying on the bed.

* * * * *

There was a knock on the door. But I kept still. And then there came another knock, and I heard the voice of Anastasio. He knocked again. And after a pause I heard the sound of his footsteps as he walked back across the circular cellar. I heard his footsteps as I had heard them before, going, going—and then seeming to stop suddenly.

It seemed to me as if there were some difference in the darkness of the room. And I got up, pulled the bed over, and opened the door.

It was daylight. Anastasio had come to call me. I went quickly across the cellars and up to the chief room of the posada and I saw him bending down over the fire. He was blowing some twigs into a blaze with a bellows. I put my hand on his shoulder, and it was in my mind to ask him questions. Why was the room where I had passed the night without windows? Why were there so many underground places beneath the posada? Why did the sound of his footsteps stop

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suddenly when he got to a certain point? These questions were on my tongue, but it was useless for me to try to give utterance to them. I did not know enough Spanish.

"Buenos dias, señor," he said raising himself up and looking at me.

A moment after his wife came in and placed a pot of water on the fire to boil. And then one of the sons came in.

The room of the posada looked different now in the light of the morning. The gloomy, weird look of the night before was gone from it. Its look was curious and odd rather than picturesque. And it wore a damp, discoloured air—such an air as might have belonged to a place where no one lived. The fire was burning and there were people in it, but still there was a strange effect of lifelessness in it. Dust was over everything. The wine-skins that hung from the roof were coated with dust. They might have been hanging there through hundreds of years. The only thing in the room that was free from dust was a picture of the Virgin. The frame and the glass in front of the picture had been lately cleaned.

And about the room there was no air of comfort. It seemed to express but the idea of being a place of shelter—a place where men might come after fighting—a place where men might hide and wait. It gave one no impression of ever having been intended for a place where life could be lived. It was just one of the rooms of a strong place of shelter, built in a time of battle and foray and murder.

Anastasio's wife put some bread and a mug of coffee

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on a little low table and brought it over to me. I drank the coffee and then asked her how much I owed her (cuanto ?).

"Dos (two) pesetas," she answered, putting up two fingers.

I paid her and left the posada.

V

I found that Brihuega was off from the main road to Zaragoza and I gave up the idea of going to it. I had heard that it was a fair-sized town, and I knew that this being the case I would have got better accommodation there for the night than in the small villages, but it was in my mind to push on up to the north as rapidly as possible. From Zaragoza I would make for the Republic of Andorra, through which I would pass to the French frontier. Once in France my journey was at an end.

Zaragoza was a long way off. Two hundred and forty-six kilòmetros! I had just passed a kilòmetro-stone marking the distance. How far Andorra was off from Zaragoza I had no idea. On the map it looked as if it might be four hundred kilòmetros still farther north. But maps do not tell one a great deal in Spain.

The road was one of the finest I had ever tramped along in my life. A good, broad road without the hardness that often belongs to an English road. And still a road that was not too soft One got a lift and a spring out of it at every step.

And the day was not as it was the day before. There

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ALONG THE ROAD

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was no steady, depressing rain. It was a bright day, full of sunshine and tempered by a cool wind.

To walk on such a day was a delight to the senses. It made one feel like a giant to swing along in the October air—the air that had in it just a faint touch of sharpness.

Surely soldiers had passed along this road. The thought of it came into my mind as I swung along with my knapsack on my back. Tramping thousands of soldiers—French soldiers—must have gone along this road as I was going now. A century ago. They must have passed along here on their way to Zaragoza—the rapacious, destroying soldiers of Napoleon :—the devil-genius who laid waste to Spain and whom England rightly chained to a rock.

Almadrones. I had covered twenty-eight kilòmetros, and the sun was but an hour high above the distant mountains. I had met hardly any one through the whole of the day. It was a lonesome country—lonesome, but still beautiful and fertile. Since the morning I had met but two or three arrieros—men driving mules.

I felt fresh and vigorous. The day had been a wonderful one. If I had had some one to talk to it would have been better, but one can't have everything. I would have gone on farther, but the last arriero I had met told me that the next village past Almadrones was more than twenty kilòmetros from it. Pressing on for it would mean my getting there in the middle of the night.

Almadrones seemed to be composed only of the posada, which faced right on to the road. But I was told by the people who kept it that the village lay off from the road four kilòmetros.

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At first I had some difficulty in getting the food I wanted in the posada. The old woman who kept it said that she had no coffee and no huevos (eggs). I did not ask for meat—it would have been useless.

All that there seemed to be in the place was bread and wine. The wine would be all right, but I knew from experience that the bread would be heavy and hard. Wine and that sort of bread was hardly what I wanted.

The old woman's manner suggested complete indifference as to whether my wants were complied with or not. After telling me that she had neither eggs nor coffee, she took no further notice of me. I sat down and waited. It was the only thing to do.

My patience was at last rewarded. A young, bright-looking woman entered the posada, and I appealed to her. And everything was satisfactory. There were eggs and coffee and even ham (jamon) in the posada. I was saved.

I took the precaution of cooking the eggs myself. The Spaniards dealt too much in oil to suit my taste. The old woman gazed upon me with sharp criticism in her eye as I carefully poured into the pan about a tenth of the oil she would have put in. With a great flourish I cracked the eggs, and then I held the pan high up over the flame. "Huevos a la Inglesa," I said. My object was to impress her. But I fear that I failed. In her eye was a look of scorn. She seemed in no way enchanted either with myself or my English method of frying eggs.

We sat down to eat—five of us. There were the old lady and her husband, the young woman and her

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husband, and my humble self. The men came in just before the meal was ready.

Drinking wine "a trago." It was at this meal where I received my initiation into the art. It was a method of drinking wine that did not quite appeal to me at first. But I soon got to like it. This was the way it was done:—

The wine was contained in a bota (leathern wine-bag) which held something over a quart. On the top of the bota was screwed a stopper in which was a very small hole. The performer—or rather drinker—simply held the bota high up above the head with both hands, and from the small hole there flew a thin, fierce stream of wine right into the drinker's wide-open mouth. When the drinker had stowed in a sufficient quantity he or she passed the bota on to the next one, and the next one passed it on to the next one. To see people drinking wine in this way was not what might be called an inspiring sight, but one got used to it as one gets used to anything. And, besides, it was really the best way to drink wine—far better than drinking it out of a glass. In drinking wine in the ordinary way the rim of the glass goes into the mouth and one necessarily tastes it. But in drinking wine "a trago" one gets the taste and flavour of the wine and nothing more.

In the course of the meal the old lady passed the bota on to me. I felt a bit nervous, but I did not like to ask for a glass. It is always as well to conform as much as possible to the customs of the country you may chance to be in.

I raised the bota valorously up above my head, and—

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well, I got the thin, fierce stream of wine right in the eye. At this every one, to put it with mildness, seemed amused. I believe that this accident put me into the good graces of the company. The old lady's eye no longer beamed upon me in an unfriendly, critical manner. My accidental appeal to their sense of humour caused them to adopt a more friendly attitude towards me.

I slept by the fire that night in my clothes, and the next morning I was off on the road again. After going for ten kilòmetros I came to a place called Algora. I was now well into the mountains.

In the posada at Algora I met a priest who was most obliging and polite.

Indeed, I may say here that I found the priests right through Spain the most courteous and obliging of men. If a traveller got into any argument or difficulty they were always willing to help him out. I am not, of course, going into any discussion as to the merits of the religion they taught. This would be out of place, and not to the point. But I must testify to the fact that they exercised a civilising influence over the people. In the big towns through which I passed in Spain I had no means of gauging their influence. But I had in the country. And I must say that their influence seemed to be for the best —I mean for the best from the practical standpoint of keeping unruly elements in order. Another point. Spain is not the priest-ridden country it is alleged to be by people who know nothing whatever about it. It is a fine country, peopled by a fine people, whose ways and methods of living and thinking are, naturally enough, their own ways—Spanish ways.

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The priest in Algora helped to get a meal ready for me. He ground the coffee. And over our cigarettes we tried to discuss matters connected with life and the soul. But the discussion sailed under difficulties. My Spanish really only extended as far as being able to ask for food, and to ask my way, and to ask how much I had to pay for things. It was therefore difficult for me to discuss ethereal, theological points with the priest. He was a slight, ascetic-looking man, with a pale, intelligent face. He had not been much around, but he evidently knew something of people.

About two kilòmetros past Algora I saw a party of people crossing the road. Some of them were mounted, some were afoot. As I got nearer I saw that there were women and children in the party. I wondered who they could be, and then it struck me that perhaps they were gipsies. I hurried towards them.

Yes, I was right. They were gipsies. I could tell them now by their dress.

I hailed them and they stopped. I wanted to see what they were like—these gipsies here in the province of Guadalajara. These strange, mysterious people of the open air. And I gave a woman who sat on a horse a peseta to tell my fortune. She smiled as she looked into my hand and spoke something rapidly in Spanish, the purport of which I could not follow. I said I did not understand, and she asked me if I understood French. No. I did not understand French! And she smiled again and went on telling the meaning of the lines of my hand in Spanish —as before. All the other gipsies crowded around as she was telling my fortune, and I had a good look at them.

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My object in having my fortune told was so that I could see them at close quarters. They were as the gipsies were in Granada—as, indeed, gipsies are the world over. A brown-faced, strange people, with mystery in their eyes. They kept silence whilst the woman who sat on the horse spoke. They listened gravely to what she was saying. What she said I don't know, but from the look on the faces of the gipsies it was something that in a way was of import to them. It may have been that the reading of a stranger's hand—one from the outside—had for them a significance of its own. The getting of pesetas thereby was, perhaps, but a thing incidental. The hand of the stranger might tell them something—something of the attitude of the world towards their race.

I left them and went along through the mountains.

The mountains now became lonesome and wild and sinister. And far, far ahead I could see the road winding up and around and up and around as would wind a vast, huge snake. I could see it winding on before me through the mountains for more then twenty kilòmetros. Now it was lost. Now the sun was shining upon it as it curved along far up yonder. To look at it produced in one a feeling of cold. This long, long winding road through the lonesome, sinister mountains.

I felt differently to what I had felt the day before. Then the joy of swinging along through the free, open air was upon me. But now I felt depression. It seemed as if I had been walking along this winding road through these wild mountains for an eternity.

Alcolèa del Pinar. It was dark when I arrived here. The sun had been down for two hours. I had walked the

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last four kilòmetros in total darkness. But the road was broad and good—one that could not easily be strayed from however dense the darkness.

I liked the posada in Alcolèa del Pinar. It was filled with cheerful, noisy people. It was good to hear them talking and laughing loudly after my walk through the lonesome mountains. And Don Esteban, the propietario, was a fellow I liked. He was a fine, big, hearty-looking Spaniard with blue eyes. What often struck me was the number of Spaniards I met with blue eyes.

A great wood fire was crackling and burning. It was cold enough to make sitting before it with a jug of wine pleasant. I had walked over thirty kilòmetros that day and was feeling as a man might feel after doing a day's work. The loneliness of the walk in the mountains was forgotten as I sat drinking my wine in the midst of the jovial noise around me. Don Esteban went around like a worthy English landlord, supplying the needs of this one and that one. Indeed, he looked as English as it was possible for a Spaniard to look. He had the build and almost the colour of face of a Yorkshireman. I liked Don Esteban.

The next day, just as I got into the province of Soria, I saw a party which was being convoyed through the mountains by two men of the guardia civil. The guards walked on either side of the party with their Mausers held at the trail. They could have shot the life out of anything coming from any side. The only chance that a highway robber would have of borrowing money from the party would be to wait for it in a narrow pass. Even then the enterprise would possess its risks.

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The party being convoyed consisted of an old man with a long beard, who rode on a donkey, a boy who trotted by his side, and another man. There were five in all with the two guardia civiles. They were walking at a smart pace.

As they came on towards me I felt a trifle anxious. I hoped that they would have acuteness enough to perceive that I was a respectable person—that I did not belong to the fraternity who rudely demanded loans from people before they were introduced to them. I walked quickly towards them, thrilled with nervous hope.

It was all right. I stopped and saluted and the party stopped and saluted. The only one who did not salute was the boy. He just stared at me with his mouth open.

The old gentleman with the beard asked me a question which I did not understand, and I answered him politely in English. Then one of the guards asked me something. I answered him also in English. I thought it as well to understand as little as possible. I wished to be going on.

But the guard pointed to my eye-glasses, and motioned to me that he would like to try them on. I took them off and handed them to him, and he put them on and moved his head this way and that way as people do when trying glasses on for the first time. Then he handed them to the other guard, who also tried them on. At this they were handed back to me. And I then offered them to the old gentleman with the beard who bestrode the donkey. But he refused them with a polite gesture. The other man also refused them, and I put

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them on myself. At this the guards again trailed arms, every one saluted, and the party went on and I went on.

Coming across a party being convoyed through the mountains by guards was instructive. It was a proof that these mountains were not quite so safe as they might be. I liked the Spaniards very much, but still, it was easy to see that they were a people who would take naturally to enterprises of an adventurous character. They were essentially a people who possessed a leaning towards violence. Whilst their character was fine, there seemed to be in it an undercurrent of sullenness. This was hardly noticeable in the people of Andalusia, but it was strongly noticeable in the people of Castile. It is the sullen people who kill.

This day was but as the day before—a lonesome tramp through mountains. After meeting the party that was being convoyed I met no one else till I got to Arcos. I arrived there at about nine o'clock at night, and to my joy I found a café. But it was presided over by a most impudent boy.

I had a difficulty in getting a place to sleep here, because of the lateness of the hour. There was no room for me in the café, and when at last I found the posada the old man who kept it would not allow me to come in until I had first given him a peseta. He was an odd-looking old man, who looked like the stage figure Gaspard in the Bells of Corneville. He had avarice written all over him. He came to the door of the posada with a candle in his shaking hand. On his head was a red night-cap, conical in shape. I would have laughed out loudly, only that I feared he might not let me in. After taking

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my measure by the light of the candle he decided that I was a person not to be trusted, and he demanded "una peseta." It was the first time that a demand to pay beforehand had been made of me in Spain.

When I got up in the morning he asked me if I wanted breakfast. I told him no. I would get breakfast somewhere else. He had injured my feelings by asking me to pay beforehand for the bed. Whilst I had a feeling that possibly my appearance warranted the making of such a demand, I nevertheless thought that it was only fair play to go and get cheated somewhere else. The accommodation I got for the peseta was of a character the less said about the better.

That night I got to Ariza, a place twenty-five kilòmetros from Arcos. As usual, I met hardly any one through the whole of the day. No one seemed to be living in the country.

On the road to Zaragoza.

It was beginning to get dull. I had tramped along it now for eight days, and I had met practically no one on the road. I had certainly met no travellers—without I reckoned the bearded gentleman of the day before and his party and convoy—the gentleman who bestrode the ass. I thought of him now as I sat in the dimly-lit room of the posada in Ariza. I wondered who and what he could be.

Eight days since I had left Madrid. It seemed a long time to walk along a road in silence, for practically I knew no Spanish and could therefore talk to no one even when I did meet them. All that I could do was to ask for food, and ask if I were on the right road. I

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understood some words, but not enough to follow coherently what was being said to me. And I had found out by this time that knowing only a little of a language often enough only led to misunderstanding—that it was in a way worse than knowing nothing.

I would have given the world to have met some one whom I could understand and who could have understood me. I wanted to talk, but I had to keep silence.

I was now in the province of Zaragoza, but I was a hundred and twenty-seven kilòmetros away from the town itself. I could make that easily enough in three days by forcing the pace a little. But I was afraid of the three days—they would be as monotonous as the eight days through which I had gone.

When I came to pay my score on the following morning, I noticed the woman of the posada looking very intently at the duro I had given her, and which she had to change. My bill had come to about three pesetas, and I was to get two pesetas back. I knew it was a good duro, and struck it on the floor with the intention of proving that it was as good as good could be. Alas! it gave forth an awful sound—a dull, leaden sound. It did not give forth the bright, clear ring of silver, as I had hoped it would,

"Malo duro!" ejaculated the woman, and I had to give her another one—after it had stood the test of being rung on the floor.

I felt sorry for myself. I did not possess too many duros. And how it came to pass that I had had this bad one palmed off on to me escaped me altogether. Spain was the home of bad coins, and I had learned to be extra

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careful. A bad duro had been shoved on to me by a gentleman of the courier persuasion in Granada, and since then I had kept my weather-eye open. And one needed to keep it open in Spain. They were a charming people, the Spaniards, and I liked them very much, but they had a jocose habit of giving the passing traveller bad money for good.

I went out of the posada and walked along the road looking at the duro. It looked all right, its weight seemed all right—but its sound made one shudder. I tried it on several stones after I got out of the village, but it seemed to get worse. And at last I gave it up as a bad job and put it back into my pocket. It brought some excitement, to be sure, into a journey that was getting dull—but it was an excitement that I could hardly afford.

I saw a man appproaching. And, what was more to the point, I saw that he was a stranger to the mountains. How I knew he was a stranger I could not have told. But I was certain of it, nevertheless.

I hurried forward to meet him. He looked very much the worse for wear, and—well, he turned out to be a tramp—a Spanish tramp. I was so glad to meet him that I gave him a peseta. I thought of poor, little, old Aquilino—whom I had got separated from down in Jaèn, in Andalusia. This man was going to Madrid just as Aquilino was.

He told me that he was an Andalusian—that he belonged to Malaga, and that he was a marinero (sailor). But I doubted this end of his yarn. He had not the look of a sailor. One can always tell men who have

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followed the water. They have much the same look in the eyes—and then there is always the gait.

Besides, had he been a sailor he would have picked up some English. However, I made him understand that I had been a marinero myself, and that I was glad that he was one. And then we shook hands and parted, wishing each other good fortune.

But hardly were we fifty yards apart when an idea came suddenly into my head. I would consult him and get his opinion about the bad duro.

I called him back and showed it to him. He took it, looked it over carefully, and then sounded it on a stone. "Bueno," he said, as he handed it back to me with a smile.

I did not understand him at first. But at last he managed to get it into my head that the coin was good, and the reason that it sounded as it did sound was because it was cracked. I had cracked it myself the time I struck it down before the woman on the stone floor of the posada!

That night I made Ateca, a town of four thousand inhabitants. After the small places through which I had passed, a town of this size wore a metropolitan air. It was like getting to a centre—a haven. There were also people living in the country approaching it. After parting from my friend the tramp I met several people coming along. The day had not turned out so lonesome as I was afraid it would.

I put up at the Fonda de Barca, a good place. The propietario was a powerfully built Spaniard with a carefully trimmed beard. He was a bit morose and silent, but a

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good sort. His name was Vicente, and after dinner he took me over to the café and introduced me around. It was here that I met a Spanish journalist—a dark bearded man wearing a cap. We fraternised together and exchanged ideas as well as we could. He gave me to understand that he was on a paper in Zaragoza, and that he was paying a visit to some friends of his here in Ateca. He was a bright, lively fellow, almost like an Andalusian.

Across the street from the café a strolling company of Spanish actors were giving a theatrical performance. The journalist and I went over to see it. A seat near the stage cost seventy-five cèntimos—about fivepence. I wanted Vicente to come, but he preferred to stop and play cards in the café.

The hall was small and the stage was small. Indeed, the actors gave one the impression of being bigger than the scenery. The audience, the hall, the little stage, and the actors were in a way similar to what they would be in England in a town the size of Ateca. There was the same shifting of tables and chairs by the actors when playing their parts, the same difficulties with the lowering of the curtain, the same eating of fruit and talking, and occasional interruptions of the audience. To my eye the only real difference was the difference of language. Being here in this little hall made me feel almost as if I were at home in England.

This piece was called Don Juan Tenorio. To me it seemed to be a kind of historical melodrama, the scene of which was laid in the Spain of the Middle Ages. It was full of fights and love and murder and intrigue. It went well with the audience.

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"TO ME IT SEEMED TO BE A KIND OF HISTORICAL MELODRAMA"

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The author of it was a man named José Torrilla. He had been dead four years, the journalist informed me, and now his play was having a great vogue.

I had told them at the fonda to wake me up at six the next morning, but when the knock came on the door of my room I refrained from getting up. It occurred to me that the time was favourable for the taking of a day off. I had had a wearisome tramp through the mountains, and it seemed to me that I was entitled to a rest. I would loaf and lounge and take it easy for the day in Ateca, and would start for Zaragoza the following morning. So I ignored the knock and fell asleep again.

I got up at about eleven o'clock, and after having breakfast Vicente and I took a gentle walk together around Ateca. It was an old, Moorish-looking sort of town and had a curious, irregularly-shaped market, the entrance to which was through an arch. We passed through it and went on around till we came to the River Jalon, where there were a lot of women washing clothes. As we crossed over the bridge Vicente shook his fist at the river and exclaimed, "Malo rio."

It was a modest, unobtrusive-looking river, and I wondered why Vicente should abuse it, but he gave me to understand that it had nearly destroyed Ateca. A month before it had risen up and swept everything before it. When we got back to the fonda he showed me the water mark along the wall. The river had risen six feet above the level of the main street.

That night I had dinner with the chief of police, an advocate, and a schoolmaster. The chief of police was a

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good-natured, smart-looking young man, and the advocate looked dreamy and intellectual. I was taken with the advocate. He was very unlike the sharp-faced, shifty-eyed barrister one so often sees in an English court of law. He looked like a poet.

The schoolmaster, however, was quite a different person. His voice was loud and rasping, and his manner was most informing. Much to my discomfort, he took me under his wing. He assailed me with innumerable questions which I did not understand. And whenever I tried to speak a word of Spanish he was extremely anxious that I should get the sound just right. He would pronounce the word after me in his rasping voice, and get me to pronounce it again. And then he would go on at me with a string of questions.

After dinner I went over towards the hall where I had seen the play the night before. There was to be another theatrical performance, and I had got my ticket for it during the afternoon.

But there was no one around. I was surprised at this. I had expected to see a crowd at the door.

I went in, and a lame man came towards me from a small group of people who were standing in the centre of the hall. There were only two or three lights burning, and the little stage looked empty and dark. I held out my ticket to the lame man. He took it, and then offered me the seventy-five cèntimos I had paid for it.

It was as I had thought. The money that had come in—through the sale of the seats during the day—had been so small that the little company could not afford to play for it, and so they were giving it back.

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It went to my heart. I had once myself been a member of a strolling company of players to whom the same thing had happened. A night came—the last night of all—when not enough money had come into the house to make it worth while playing to. And we had given it back just as the little Spanish company was giving it back now.

I did not take the seventy-five cèntimos that were offered to me, but I walked towards the group standing in the centre of the hall. The lame man went forward to the door. Some one else was coming in with a ticket.

There was the señora who had played the lead in the piece of the night before. Her hair was white, but she was a vital, capable-looking woman. She had, however, the sad and worn expression in the eyes that comes to those who have fought adversity for a long time. She was a woman, perhaps, of forty-five. Just one of a band of strolling players. But she had talent for the stage. It might have been that if she had had a chance she would have been recognised by the world as great. Chance is a big word. By her side was a girl of about twelve who had also played the night before. Her own girl. And there was another actress. And an actor.

I bowed to the little group, and soon we were talking to each other as well as we could.

So I was a "camarada"! I, too, had been an actor! Ah, bueno! And so we talked on. I managed to tell them how the company I had been with had had an experience such as they were having now. And the actress with the white hair told me that they were going in the morning to Calatayud. "Ah! ciudad (city) mucha bueno."

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They were to play there for a week (semana). "Ateca, pobre pueblo" (poor village). And then we all had coffee together, and I went back to the Fonda de Barca.

VI

The next day as I was going along the road from Ateca I saw in the distance a man standing on the top of a big barrel and moving about in rather an odd manner. When I got near enough to him, however, I found that he was a human wine-press. The barrel was full of black grapes and he was stamping the juice out of them. His feet were large and heavy looking. Nature had been extremely kind to him in the fitting of him out for the task.

It was hardly an æsthetic sight to see him walking all over the grapes. But I had been told that grapes when treated in this manner produced the best wine. The foot of the stamper, I was assured, gave to the wine a certain roundness of flavour. Men had told me that they could tell the difference between foot-pressed and machine-pressed wine. But I suppose that Spain possesses its liars just like any other country.

After I had been walking for about three hours I came upon an old man and two women who were travelling easily along the road with a couple of donkeys. The old man had a villainous, destructive looking face. He took quite a fatherly interest in me. He wanted to know all about me, and when I told him, amongst other things, that I was going to Zaragoza he gave me to understand that it would be much better for me if I were to go along with him. He knew short cuts through the mountains. If I

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were to go along with him I would be saved "muchos leguas" (many leagues). The women also assured me that it would be much better if I joined their party.

I let them know how pleased and flattered I was by their asking me to join them. I would gladly have gone with them—only I thought I had better stick to the high road! The old gentleman's manner was kindly—but he had the face of a retired bandolero (highwayman). A man carries what he is in his face. And this kindly old person gave me the impression that it would be just as well to keep one's revolver trained upon him whilst he was around. Besides, I had been told in Madrid that these mountains were dangerous. I had paid little attention to this at the time, but the fact of having met—four days before—a party being convoyed through them had put me on the alert. Another point. In a strange place in a strange country it is always well to stick to the high road. A short cut may lead you to the road from whence there is no returning.

Again I thanked with effusion this kindly old person with the sinister face. And I offered him a cigarette. He took it with thanks many and profound. And then I hurried swiftly along.

At last I came up to a town surrounded by a wall. It was called Calatayud. It was an ancient-looking place with a strongly fortified air. Guards were standing at the several gates entering into it. They gave to the town a martial aspect—as if the people in it were armed and alert and ready for the coming of invaders. One of the guards was sitting on a big stone outside his particular gate having his dinner. His wife stood close by. She had brought him his

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dinner at the dinner hour just in the same way as the wife of an English workman would bring him his. The familiar, homely little scene made me think how alike after all the people of one country are to that of another.

The guards were here to prevent smuggling. I don't know all the things upon which a duty was levied—but evidently articles of food came in for special attention. Whilst I was standing round, a cart came up laden with grapes. The cart was placed on a weighing machine—the horse was taken from the shafts—the whole thing was carefully weighed, the driver paid over some money—he received a receipt—and then the horse was put back into the shafts, and grapes, cart, horse, and man disappeared together through the gate into Calatayud. Another man came up with fowls. He paid and passed in. And then a woman came up with fowls. The same thing happened. And so the performance went on. I would have liked very much to have gone into the town myself. It looked very interesting off through the old Moorish-looking arches. And I had been told that twelve thousand people lived in it. But I did not care to go through the bother of having my knapsack examined. There was also another reason. A box of cartridges was in the knapsack and I was not quite sure of the reception that cartridges would get from the guards. I might get into trouble over them. I had forgotten to take the box out and put it into my pocket, as I was in the habit of doing before entering a town. I had therefore to deny myself the pleasure of exploring Calatayud.

That night I slept at a posada in Il Fresno—a place not marked on the map of Spain. I slept before the fire

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with three other men. They were hard-working fellows who had to be out in the campo (field) early the next morning, and I had seen at a glance that nothing was to be feared from them. I slept as usual with my revolver under my head. Not that it would have saved me much, however, if the Spaniards had wanted to go for me in the middle of the night.

A little after dawn I was again swinging along. I was now only sixty-six kilòmetros from Zaragoza. My intention was to make La Muela—forty kilòmetros off—that night. This would mean my getting into Zaragoza at three or four o'clock in the afternoon of the following day. I wanted to avoid getting into the town at night. It was at once awkward and dangerous. One could never tell what a guard would be apt to do.

About the middle of the day I came up to a town with a long name:—La Almunia de Doña Godina. It had gates and was walled round something like Calatayud, but it was much smaller. I went into it—after running the gauntlet of its guards—to get something to eat. There were several posadas in it, and I went to the biggest one of all. But the señora who kept it told me that there was no food in the place. I went to another posada, but fared no better. Then I tried a café. At the café all I could get was coffee. I wanted a beefsteak. But that was out of the question. I wandered on. But the same luck followed me. It was a town of at least three thousand inhabitants and still there appeared to be no chance of a stranger getting a square meal in it. Perhaps it was that they did not take kindly to strangers. At last I gave up the pursuit of food and I turned my steps sadly towards the gate whereat I

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had entered. I was hungry, I had money in my pocket, I was in a good-sized town, and still I could not get a meal. The thought struck me that possibly my appearance was such that people did not care to have me round. Yes, the awful thought occurred to me that possibly my eleven days' tramp from Madrid had destroyed my naturally respectable and genteel air.

It was a fine old town, was La Almunia de Doña Godina. I wondered how it came by its name. It looked as old as the hills, so to speak. I suppose it possessed a history as long and as interesting as its name. It had Moorish-looking houses and towers and arches. I should think that the tourist would have been lost in rapture as he walked through its narrow streets.

But I would have given the whole business—Moorish-looking houses and towers and arches and all—for a good beefsteak.

But just as I got near to the gate my eye fell on a little café. I had noticed it when I was coming in to the town, but I had foolishly passed it by. I had thought that I would get a better meal if I penetrated deeper into the fastnesses of La Almunia.

In I went, and lo! I was confronted by a sharp-faced old man with one eye. His eye pierced me like a gimlet—but he was an old man who was kind. In his café I got a proper meal of eggs and ham and bread and wine.

* * * * *

The country through which I was now passing was most fertile. The grapes were being gathered, and along the road there were great heaps of them lying on stretches

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of canvas. These heaps of black, luscious grapes! They were waiting here by the side of the road till the carts came along to take them away to be trodden into glorious red wine—the wine of Arragon. For miles and miles—as far as the eye could reach—there stretched immense fields of vines. Never had I even dreamed that I would see so many grapes. Grapes hanging temptingly from the vines, grapes in great heaps, grapes for miles and miles. Hanging from small, powerful vines that held themselves up from the earth. I had always thought of vines as hanging from supports. But these vines were vital and strong and held themselves proudly up to the sun.

Here was indeed a land of fruitfulness, wonderful and magical. The sap and the life and the power of the grand soil thrilled me as I walked. This Spain was indeed a land that one might be proud of. A grand, shining, fruitful land.

Near me and far from me and again far off through the miles I could see the people gathering the grapes. And I could see the carts going slowly along. I had now descended from the mountains on to a great plain.

There were no barriers along the road going through this plain—this wonderful, fruitful plain of Arragon. One had only to step from the road to be in the midst of the vines.

How delightful the black grapes tasted when plucked from the fresh vigorous vine. It seemed to me as if I had never tasted a grape before. The juice of the grape was at once warm and possessed of an effect of refreshing coolness. And there was also in the grape a strange,

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subtly delicious flavour. And this flavour passed and then there came the full individual flavour of the grape.

* * * * *

When grapes are sent up into lands of the North it must be that they lose their flavour. They are no longer what they were at the time they were taken away from the vines. And hothouse grapes are no grapes at all. I laughed as I thought of them as I went along the road through the vines.

That night, when I got to La Muela, I was still amongst the vines. I had walked forty kilòmetros, and here they were still stretching out over the land. I could make them out even through the darkness.

* * * * *

La Muela seemed deserted. It could not have been more than nine o'clock at night and still I could see no one round. Not even a dog barked as I entered the village

When I got to the other end of it, however, I saw lights streaming out of the windows of a big house to the left and I heard voices talking loudly. Judging it to be the posada I knocked on the door. It was opened by a man who informed me that the posada was the house but one further up the road.

I went there and knocked. It was a long time before the door was opened.

It was a cheerless looking place. The only one who seemed to be there was a woman who sat crouching over a small wood fire. She had just opened the door

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and had gone back to sit by the fire without saying a word.

I took off my knapsack and asked if I could have supper. She turned round and looked at me and then turned back again to the fire—still without saying a word.

I began to feel uncomfortable and it occurred to me that the best thing I could do would be to take my knapsack and go. I would stand my chance of finding another posada in La Muela. The town looked big enough to have two.

But just as I had picked it up the woman at the fire stood up and spoke. I could get nothing to eat that night in the posada, but I could stay there by the fire till the morning. I managed to get this meaning out of what she said to me. She talked very fast in a harsh voice. I also understood from her that the place where I had knocked at first was a café. If I wanted I could go there and have coffee and come back!

It seemed to me that this was about as good as I could do that night in La Muela, and I left my knapsack and went out to the café. I could hear the loud voices going as I knocked on the door.

I was shown up to a room on the floor above. The room was filled with men who were smoking and drinking and playing cards. As I entered every one seemed to look at me at once. The loud voices stopped for an instant. And then they went on as before.

I sat down and ordered coffee. When it was brought to me I asked if I could get something to eat. No, I could not. The girl who brought it said there was nothing in the café.

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A man came over to me from one of the groups who were playing cards and bowed. He was a powerful, roughly-dressed fellow with a red face. He had the look of one who had been around a great deal. At first I took him to be a sailor.

I asked him to sit down and have a drink with me. He sat down willingly enough, and we began to talk. He knew a little English.

Yes, it turned out that he belonged to the sea. But he was a fireman. He had fired in steamships all over the world. He had left a steamship in Barcelona, had come from there to Zaragoza, and on to La Muela. He was a tough-looking card and had about him the crude air that belongs to the stokehole. But I was glad to see him. In my time I had done my bit in the stokehole myself.

Half an hour passed pleasantly enough and then I shook hands with him and went down the stairs and out to the posada. I was feeling tired after my tramp of forty kilòmetros.

It was raining, and a cold wind was blowing. The temperature had dropped suddenly.

A cart was standing outside the door of the posada and the driver of it was knocking on the door. I stood alongside of him and waited for the door to be opened. But no one came. The driver knocked on the door again. And still no one came. And then I kicked on the door. My knapsack was in the posada, and besides, I didn't care to stop out all night in the rain. Still no one came. But I kicked and kicked, and then I heard the sound of the bolts being drawn from the inside.

The door opened a little and a man put his head out

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through the opening. From words he let drop I gathered that he was indignant because I had kicked on the door.

He would let me in, but he would not let in the man with the cart. The man with the cart said nothing. He just took hold of his horse's bridle and began to lead it away. I was rather put out at this, and I asked the fellow who owned the posada to let him in as well. This evidently vexed him, for he tried to close the door on me. I would have to stop out in the rain, too!

I said nothing but simply put my shoulder to the door and forced my way in. The man of the posada was beside himself with rage. One could have heard him shouting "pugnante!" a mile away. But I paid no attention to that. I meant at least to have my knapsack—and I was ready to fight if he forced me. I knew that the safest thing for me to do was to let him know that I was ready for him in case he made any ugly move.

The fire was burning up now in the posada and things could easily be seen. There was my knapsack lying near the fire. I went slowly over to it, keeping my face always turned towards the man of the posada. He was still cursing me, but I would take my oath that he knew as well as I knew that I was clutching something in my right-hand jacket pocket—something that was ready for him.

I picked up my knapsack with my left hand and went easily towards the door. I was glad when I was outside.

It was still raining—and blowing cold. The man with the cart had disappeared.

I went back into the café and told them as well as I could what had happened. And I asked them if I could sleep there for the night. But I was informed that it was

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impossible. My stokehole friend pleaded on my behalf, but it was useless. There was no room—there was no this—there was no that. I asked if I couldn't sleep on a bench in the café when the occupants were all gone. It was "imposible." Everything was impossible. Was there another posada in the village besides the one I had just left? No, there was not!

La Muela was certainly no place for the traveller, hardy or otherwise, I thought. And it slowly began to sink into my mind that I would have to tramp on to Zaragoza through the darkness and through the rain. I had become much disenchanted with La Muela. And, besides, the man in the posada might accidentally drop into the café and say all sorts of things against me. I would be sure to get into a row then, for my ignorance of Spanish would prevent me explaining to the mob his general villainy and quarrelsomeness of character.

But even on the top of all this it was a case of Hobson's choice. I would have to walk on whether I liked it or not. There was no place for me to sleep.

My sympathetic stokehole friend was now honouring me by having another drink with me. He had also rung in two of his acquaintances, who were also having a drink with me.

Suddenly I noticed the stokehole man eyeing me narrowly. And then his face beamed. Evidently an idea was working in his head concerning me. He came out with it. Why, the difficulty was solved. I could go and sleep that night with him!

I thanked him for his kindness, but I explained that I

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didn't like to give him trouble. It was no trouble—no trouble at all! It was an honour! He would hear of nothing short of my going straight off with him and his two friends, who lived in the same house. It was a long time before I could make him understand that I had determined to make for Zaragoza that night. In the end he got vexed.

I started out in the rain and the cold and the wind. But I somehow felt glad to get away from La Muela.

It was half-past eleven at night and I had to tramp twenty-five kilòmetros. I reckoned to get into Zaragoza at about four in the morning.

Hardly was I well out from La Muela when the force of the wind rose suddenly. And then lightning and thunder came, and the force of the wind rose still higher. It blew dead from the north. And in another moment it had smashed out into a terrible, sweeping storm. I could hardly keep on my feet, and I was drenched through and through with the rain that seemed hurled and driven into me from all sides at once. But I felt no cold, and when a man feels no cold being wet does not matter. I worked hard along in the middle of the smashing, striking wind. At times it struck full against my face. It choked me. But I went hard along. The lightning circled and flashed and once it lit to a great whiteness the whole scene. I saw that I was going along a plain. It was a wonderful, glorious storm with rain and thunder and tearing, flashing lightning.

* * * * *

It is fine for a man to be in the midst of a storm, if

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he be not afraid. The strike and the roar and hurtle of the wind, and the rain, and the mighty-voiced thunder, and the shooting white lightning hold within them the essence of power. They give to a man life. Let a man be unafraid, and the lightning strikes him not. Let him go on in the middle of the thunder and the wind and the fire and the rain, and to him will be given the benison of a new and strange strength.

* * * * *

The moon was shining clearly now as I hurried swiftly along. The storm had gone down and in the air was a freshness. I was now but fourteen kilòmetros from Zaragoza. I had been going for fifty-two kilòmetros with no stop save the short stop I had made at La Muela a few hours before. But I felt in no way fatigued. I was in a glow with the swift pace at which I was moving, even though I was wet through and through. By the time I got to Zaragoza my clothes would be all but dry upon me. I would come to no hurt as long as I kept going swiftly.

I came to a place where the road circled curiously up and around. The left side of it was flanked by a heavy stone wall.

I went round and round, going up all the time. When I had got to the top of the incline the wall stopped all at once and the road shot out in a straight line over another plain. The place where the road circled up was a sort of great step between one plain and another.

I passed through a village. It was as a village of

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the dead. No sound, no light, not even the growl of a dog.

Ten kilòmetros from Zaragoza. I had just passed a kilòmetro-stone. Eight. Six. I was getting near to the town. I took no note of the passing of time as I walked along. All that I wanted to know was the distance I was away. Four kilòmetros—four kilòmetros yet from Zaragoza. Three.

I stopped. It was not yet daylight, and I thought that perhaps it would be better to wait till then before I went any further.

Rows of great trees were now on either side of the road and I thought I might as well lie down at the foot of one of them and wait till the day broke. I was beginning to feel tired.

I took off my knapsack and stretched myself down, but I had been lying down for no more than a moment when the cold struck keenly into me. My clothes were not yet dry. And the wind began to rise again. I could hear it sweeping along through the tops of the trees.

This would never do. So I got up again, slipped on my knapsack, and started towards the town. I would walk well in the middle of the road and take my chances about the guards!

I walked on and on till at last a man came towards me from the side of the road. He carried a lance at the trail. The steel point of it shone as the light from his lantern fell upon it.

I had got to Zaragoza.

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XV.—A TOWN OF THE NORTH

I

I took off my knapsack and held it towards the man with the lance. He did not offer to take it however, but he raised his lantern up so as to get a good look at me. Then he signed for me to come along with him.

As I walked by his side he asked me a number of questions to which I replied in English. I thought it as well not to try to speak Spanish. It might be apt to lead to some misunderstanding. It was better for the guard to look upon me as an Inglès who did not know a word of the language.

I found it very difficult to understand any of the words he said, for he spoke with a harsh, guttural accent. But I could make out that he was much puzzled about my coming into Zaragoza in the way I did.. He pronounced the name of the town deep down in his throat, in a way hardly to be described. It sounded almost as "Tharagòtha" would sound in English if uttered well in the throat.

He brought me over to what looked in the darkness like a sentry-box. Out came another guard with a lance and they talked together for some time. I stood near them, holding my knapsack in my hand. The moon had gone down, and it was now very dark. There was no

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sign of the breaking of the day. Along down the road I could see the cold, blue-white glare of electric lights. But the light thus given seemed but to make the darkness deeper where the two guards and I were standing.

The second guard turned to me and asked me questions. He, too, spoke with a harsh, guttural accent. Again I replied in English. And in the end he signed to me to open my knapsack for examination. But just as I was loosening the straps he signed to me that it was all right. I could go on.

I did not move, however. I wanted one of them to show me a café, for I was feeling cold and hungry and wet. The difficulty, however, was to make what I wanted known to them without speaking any words of Spanish. But in the end I contrived to do it, and the guard whom I had met first came along with me. The watch kept at the entrances of Spanish towns was at once strict and free and easy.

When we came into the glare of the electric light I had a good look at the guard. He was a man of nearly thirty, well built, and just under the middle height. He wore a long overcoat over his uniform. The weather was raw and cold. His face was rugged and hard and not intelligent. Indeed, it had almost the ruggedness of a typical Scotch face. It was the face of a man of the North. He had blue eyes.

He still kept on asking me questions, which I answered as before—in English. But he was by no means discouraged at this. Whenever I answered him he would keep silence for a moment and then he would ask me a question again in his harsh, guttural Spanish. As he

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went on he raised his voice louder and louder till in the end it got to a shout. I suppose he felt that the louder he spoke the better chance would I have of understanding him.

At last we got to a café that was open. It was a fine, big café in which there was everything to be got—everything but hot coffee. I could have wine, beer, spirits, or anything. But there was no coffee. My friend with the lance urged me to have a bottle of Rioja. But, no. I wanted coffee. We went out again into the street.

It was still very dark. There was not the slightest sign of the breaking of day and I was beginning to feel pessimistic. I had evidently got to Zaragoza earlier than I had thought. I was tired and cold and wet. I had walked sixty-six kilòmetros since the morning before. And I was going along now at much too sharp a pace over rough cobblestones. The guard was much too good a walker for me in my present condition. I could hardly keep up with him. The only chance I got to hold my own was when he turned to ask me one of his questions.

Suddenly I conceived the idea of getting rid of him. I would wait till daylight and find a café for myself. I called to him—as he was forging ahead—and offered him a peseta, and endeavoured to make him understand that I was now all right—that I could look after myself.

But he would neither take the peseta nor would he leave me. He was that terrible thing—a man of conscience. Here was I, a poor stranger in Zaragoza, and he was going to see that I was put right. This must have been the thought that was in his head. I, of course, wouldn't have

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minded his staying with me. But what worried me was his speed. He was too good a walker.

So I struggled on after him till we came to a fine, wide, brilliantly lit-up plaza. The guard told me that it was the Plaza de la Constitucion. We stopped to admire it, and I must say that I was glad of the rest. In fact I sat down on a bench the better to take in the wonder of the view.

Over on the other side of the plaza was a big hotel. Above the door was a huge electric lamp. Towards this hotel the guard and I went.

We mounted the steps, pushed open the door, and found ourselves in a hall of elegance and magnificence. I caught a view of myself in a glass that ran along the side of the magnificent hall, and I must own that I was startled. I looked the tramp indeed—unshaven, unkempt, dirty-looking, and weather-worn. No, this grand-looking hotel was not the place for me.

I turned and signed to the guard for us to go. But he would not stir. He just grounded the butt of his lance on the marble floor. He felt that he had done his duty in guiding me to this haven of rest.

Somebody came. I suppose it was the head waiter. As soon as he opened his mouth I knew he was German. I shivered under his glance. I knew that he felt that I was in no sense a desirable guest for his hotel.

It would not do for him to be rude to me, however, for my respectability was, so to speak, vouched for by the presence of the man with the lance. Whilst the law in Spain is generally slack there are times when it is not at all slack—when it is stern and Spartan and to the point.

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One of the things that it requires is that its outward dignity be respected. And obvious tramp though I was, I was presented here to this place of magnificence under its ægis.

The guard talked and the German talked and then they both stopped and looked at me. And then I talked. The German understood some English and I told him that I wanted something to eat there and then. It was impossible, he said, the cook was not yet up. Could I have hot coffee then, I demanded. I could not! At this I turned scornfully from the German, took the arm of the guard, and walked with him to the door. I was not going to give my custom to a hotel where I could get nothing to eat!

I felt relieved when I got outside the hotel. And I suppose the German inside felt relieved.

I made another effort to get rid of my friend the guard. He took the peseta I offered him this time—but he would not go. He knew of other hotels. In despair I went with him—or rather after him. But fortunately the next place we got to was closed.

Again I appealed to him to go, and this time my appeal was successful. He departed after shaking me warmly by the hand. I was glad to see his lance and himself taking themselves off. I would now be able to walk along at an easy, moderate pace.

At last day broke over the town and the streets began to stir and hum with life and noise. I was glad. For me it had been a long night.

The people hurried along through the grey streets just as people would hurry along in a town in the north of

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England. About them was an air of power and energy. They were people of the North.

And Zaragoza itself had an air of a town of the North. The outlines of its buildings were clear and stern and hard. The town expressed what was in the faces of its people just as do all towns.

A town of the North. A north where the sky was clear and wonderful. But still the North. How like the town was to its name—its name as pronounced by its people. "Tharagòtha." There was something fine and barbarously noble in the sound of the word. A name such as this might well be given to a town of their own by the fair-haired barbarians who sacked and burned the world-town, Rome.

II

I went down the Calle de Don Jaime Primero. And soon I was seated comfortably in a little café on the right-hand side of the street drinking hot milk. I had tried to get coffee but the woman, who kept the place told me she had none. It was a little café evidently frequented in the early morning by men on their way to work.

When I had finished my first cup of milk I ordered another one. The woman got it for me, but as it did not seem as hot as the first one I handed it back to her, asking her to make it hotter. This she refused to do. She said that if she made the milk any hotter it might crack the copa (cup). I gave her to understand that I would pay for the copa if it were cracked. But she was obdùrate. I had to drink the milk as it was. She was a being with a stern cast of face.

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After I left the café I turned to my right down the calle (street) and was soon at the river Ebro—a big, wide river. Here everything was bustle and excitement. Work-people were streaming into Zaragoza over a long bridge of many arches. Several guards were round and about on the alert seeing that they smuggled nothing in. If a woman or a man came along with a basket or a bundle they had to open it for examination. But the examining was done very quickly. Often enough a guard only just felt at a bundle or rapped with his lance on a basket. I wondered how he could tell by just rapping on a basket whether or not there was anything contraband in it. But the majority of the people crossing the bridge carried nothing.

Unconsciously I went outside the line of guards to have a closer look at the bridge. It was old and curious looking. I found out after that it was called Puente de Piedra (Bridge of Stone).

When I turned back after looking at it I was stopped by a guard. He wanted to examine my knapsack which I now carried in my hand. I explained to him that I had not come over the bridge at all, that I had only taken a few paces forward to get a vista (view). But he peremptorily ordered me to open it. I suppose he had not noticed me coming up from the calle.

After the knapsack had been thoroughly overhauled I went back up the street and turned into a barber's shop. I intended to get a shave and a brush down, and my shoes blackened, before I tackled the next hotel.

The barber who shaved me told me that I would have to go back to the Plaza de la Constitucion to get my shoes blackened.

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ZARAGOZA. PUENTE DE PEIDRA (BRIDGE OF STONE

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UNIV. OF
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I walked along, now feeling half respectable, when I noticed a hotel on the left side of the street. I would have passed it by but for its name. It was the longest name that I had ever seen on a hotel in my life. It was called the "Gran Hotel del Universo Y de las Cuatro Naciones." I gazed upon the name with wonder and astonishment. It meant that it was the hotel of the universe and of the four nations.

As I was gazing upon it a man came up to me and exclaimed, "Hola!" I looked at him. He wore a cap on which was the word "Interprete" in brass letters. I felt at home, for here was a man whose trade was a knowledge of the various languages. He must necessarily know English.

But he didn't. Or at least the English he knew was not the English I knew. He spoke to me in all the known tongues of the world, and finally he fell back on his native Spanish. It was then that I began to understand him. He was telling me what a grand and desirable hotel was the "Gran Hotel del Universo Y de las Cuatro Naciones," and to my gratified amazement he further told me that they would be charmed to have me there as a guest. Ocho (eight) pesetas a day! I was saved. Saved without even getting my shoes blackened. I followed my good genius and guide through the hospitable portals of the hotel. He insisted on carrying my knapsack himself. He—the man of the multitudinous languages!

The manager of the hotel was himself in the office and I must say that he received me as if I were a duke. He was an Italian who spoke English the meaning of which I could grip. I told him who I was and what I was, and

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why my shoes were in the condition they were in. Amongst other things I told him that I had once sung in the chorus of an opera company with Italians, and that Italians were on the face of it the finest of fine people. I made myself as agreeable as possible, for I was glad to have got to a place where I could get a proper rest after my long tramp. The fear had come upon me that in view of my general appearance I might probably not be allowed into a hotel at all.

On my saying that I would like to go up to a room, the manager rang bells and gave quick orders, and in a second or so I found myself being piloted up the broad staircase by an energetic, sharply-moving young man.

I followed him with closeness as he scudded along a passage. I followed him as he made quick, abrupt turns into this passage and that passage. I stuck to him like wax—though his pace was hurtling and swift—for it would not do to lose him. I was tired, but I knew that in the end I would come across my reward. I would find rest.

Just as I was beginning to realise what a big hotel it was, my pilot stopped at the door of a room, pushed it open with suddenness, and in a trice the sheets of the bed were changed, clean towels appeared as if by magic—and the door was banged.

My pilot was gone. I sat on the edge of the bed bewildered but joyful. How quick were the people of Zaragoza! How sudden! How startling! Hazily I thought of dear old Andalusia where the people realised to the full that there was always another day—the day called to-morrow. I thought of good old Granada, and—well,

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I found myself on the floor. I had dropped asleep and fallen off the bed.

In another moment I was undressed and in bed and sleeping the sleep of the just.

When I woke up again I felt like a lion refreshed. I was out of bed in a moment and soon I was downstairs in the dining-room tackling a huge meal. It was one o'clock in the day. I had slept for about five hours. After I had eaten I went out to have a look round.

My first thought was to get my shoes blackened, and I went in the direction of the Plaza de la Constitucion. When I came up to the Calle del Coso I found it thronged with people. A festa was going on. In the middle of the street were passing gigantic figures with gigantic heads. Around the figures strangely dressed mummers were dancing. And the air was filled with music of bands.

After hard work I got through the crowd over to a kiosk in the plaza where shoes were blackened. I sat at my ease looking through Spanish illustrated papers whilst I was being polished into respectability. It was a tough job—for the shoe-black. But the look of injury left his face when I gave him an extra tip.

When I came out of the kiosk there was great excitement. A regiment of soldiers was marching into the plaza from the Calle de Don Jaime Primero and every one was running to see them. They were artillery. On they came into the plaza with the steady rhythmic step of soldiers. In their midst were rumbling, sinister, wheeled, low-mounted guns.

They passed round the plaza and marched up the Calle de la Independencia. And right after them there

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came a regiment of infantry, carrying their rifles at the slope. They were sturdy, handy-looking fellows and moved with an easy swing of the body—the sign of marching power. Instead of shoes they wore a sort of sandal which left the foot very largely bare. It struck me that these sandals were better for marching in than the shoes worn by English soldiers for the reason that they allowed the toes free play—that they did not cramp them. In long marches—especially when carrying weight on the back—it is important that the great toe should have room to spread outwards. It then gives to the leg more power and sureness of step. And a man is less apt to stumble. This lessening of the chance of stumbling is a most important thing for infantry when working quickly over rough ground to take a position.

All through the afternoon soldiers were marching through the plaza. Regiments were coming and going and coming and going. It seemed as if the whole army of Spain was centred here in Zaragoza.

I sat down to dinner that night at the hotel with as strange a looking crowd as one could well imagine. There were gaily dressed Spanish officers, people in evening dress, people from the country, German commercial travellers, priests, and people whom I could not make out at all. All mixed up together. I got up an argument with a Spaniard who sat next to me. I tried to expound to him the vast difference there was between the people of Andalusia and the people of Aragon. And he tried to expound something to me. We got on famously together, mainly, I suppose, because neither of us understood what the other was saying.

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What struck me was the perfect ease and freedom of everybody. The people who were from the country—and who were attired in country dress—had none of the air of not being in the swim such as country people under the same circumstances would have in England. One of the country women had a handkerchief tied round her head. Her dress altogether was very like that of a factory girl of the North of England. The woman who sat next to her was dressed most fashionably. They talked and laughed and chatted together on the best of terms. Evidently appearances in Spain were not everything. People were taken for what they were.

After dinner I went to the Teatro Principal. A comedy was going along at full swing. It must have been full of wit and humour, for every one in the theatre laughed tremendously. It is a hard thing to see other people laugh and not to be able to laugh one's self. Here was a comedy bubbling over with fun, and here was I sitting up in the gallery as grave as a funeral, trying to catch some word or another from the stage that I could understand.

I came out.

A short walk brought me up to the corner of the Calle Don Alfonso. Here a man was playing a violin. A crowd was round him listening. He was playing Schubert's wonderful serenade. There came from his violin a smooth, tender, strange tone. A young woman with a pale face stood by his side. She held in her hand a little tray to collect money. But she was not thinking of money now. She was listening to the player just as the crowd were listening. Perhaps she was his wife. Perhaps she was

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his sweetheart. And as he played he turned his face to hers. They loved each other.

How vital and stirring and full of life were the great, moving, thronging crowds! Latins with the power and vigour of the North in a town of the North. Deep-voiced, grave, quick-gestured, strong people. Latins with soberness in their blood. And still Latins full of fire and full of the sense of enjoying life. To be here with them in the midst of their festa was to be of them. Spain was a land of festas. And herein was its wisdom, for life is lived but once.

Yonder was a little compact crowd on the edge of the great moving crowd in the plaza. I went up to it. A woman was singing. What the song was I don't know further than that it was plaintive and sad. In a way it sounded out of place in the swing and lights and move of the festa, and still it was not out of place. Sadness and joy and pathos are bound together.

A girl was crouched down by the side of the woman who sang. Around her was a black cloak and she seemed to be holding something. The night was cold even though the plaza was full of light and noise and moving people.

For a time I stopped listening to the woman who was singing. When her song was finished she bent and whispered to the girl who was crouched down by her side. The girl arose and then I saw what she had been holding beneath her cloak. It was a little boy about three years old. He was asleep. She had sheltered him from the cold whilst his mother sang. Daughter, mother, and little son. The relationship was plain to be seen. They

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went away together through the great, moving crowd in the plaza. I followed them a little. The mother now carried the boy in her arms. The sleep had gone from him. "Mio madre," I heard him say. And they were lost in the crowd.

And here were people in strange, fantastic dress, dancing. And here again were people singing or playing to small crowds. And in the distance could be heard the music of bands, coming or going. How like to the fulness of life was the whole scene! Life with its gaiety, its pathos, its laughter, its sadness, its in-weavings and out-weavings.

At last I turned from the plaza towards the Calle Don Jaime. And soon I was going along through the narrowness and the darkness of the old street.

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XVI.—THROUGH CATALONIA

I

I got to Lérida in Catalonia on a Sunday afternoon. It was there that I had to take the stage to Seo de Urgel. I had had my fill of tramping between Madrid and Zaragoza, and again I was afraid that if I did not push on, the cold weather would make the crossing of the Pyrenees a bit awkward. My intention was to tramp through the Republic of Andorra and descend into France from the other side of the mountains.

Down the Rambla de Fernando I sauntered till I came to the Fonda de España. I went in and got a good meal for two pesetas. After I had eaten I tried to glean some information from the landlord as to the starting of the stage-coach for the north. He was a civil, informing sort of a man, and he told me many things in rather odd-sounding Spanish. The only difficulty I had was to select from his wealth of information. It seemed to me that he told me that the stage was to start in two hours, and again I understood him to say that it was to start in six hours, and again that it would be two days before it started. I was puzzled as to which of his statements I was to act upon. And then it dawned upon me that possibly it was I who was at fault—that maybe I just

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knew enough Spanish to be able to misunderstand it when I heard it spoken.

I left my knapsack in the fonda and went out to have a look round Lérida. It was a bright afternoon and the Rambla de Fernando was well filled with people who were promenading backwards and forwards.

The rambla is rather difficult to describe. It was in no way like an English street nor was it like a walk in an English park. Neither was it like a French boulevard. It was wide and was well planted with trees. It at once acted as a street, and a walk in a park, and a promenade. Its surface was not flat. It rose gradually from the houses on either side and reached its highest point in the middle. A line drawn over it from side to side would form a section of a circle.

I walked up the rambla till I came in front of a large café which stood off over on the right-hand side. A great noise was coming from it and I went in. It was filled with men who were sitting at square tables, drinking and smoking. And here it was that I had my first introduction to the Spanish of the Catalans.

They spoke the language as if it did not fit them. It seemed to come from them with difficulty. They made a rumbling noise in the throat and then barked out their words. Their accent was distinctly Gaelic. Imagine Gaelic spoken roughly and gutturally and you will have some idea of the way the Catalans spoke Spanish.

To my ear by far the best Spanish is spoken in Andalusia. There it has the music and the softness of a language of the South. The Castilians, of course, say

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that their Spanish is the Spanish. But their habit of lisping the consonants worries the ear.

I sat down in the café and ordered a cigar (puro) from the waiter. He brought it, and I asked the price of it.

"Bin," he answered.

Bin! In my mind I ran quickly through all the Spanish words I knew, but nowhere could I find the word "bin." I was floored completely even though I knew all the words that expressed the price of things. And I was forced to fall back on the humiliating, greenhorn method of putting money on the table so that the waiter could help himself. He picked twenty céntimos.

"Ah!" I exclaimed, "Viente!" (twenty).

"Si," said the waiter. "Viente, Castellano—bin, Catalan."

I paused to stow away this word safely within my memory. Viente was called "bin" in Catalonia. There was what might be called a slight difference. Indeed, as a matter of fact, the sound of the English word twenty was a great deal nearer the mark than "bin." Not only did the Catalans speak Spanish in a foreign-sounding way, but, to use an Irishism, they spoke Spanish that wasn't Spanish at all. And I began to wonder if the landlord of the fonda had been regaling me with Catalan when I made inquiries concerning the stage-coach.

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The men in the café nearly all wore flat caps with peaks, and they looked as northern as people from the North of England. Their gestures were decisive and

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abrupt, and they looked virile and full of energy. They had the hardness of expression of face and the fresh colour of men who lived in a country where winters are severe. To look at them one would have thought that they belonged to a climate very much farther north than the North of Spain. Though their faces looked hard there was not the underlying sullenness in them that one noticed in the faces of the men of Castile. It seems to me that men of a certain breed, or of a certain place—which is much the same thing—have as distinct a general expression of face from men of another breed or of another place as men have, individually, from each other. There is a collective expression of face just as there is an individual expression.

These Catalans were well put together in the body, and they had the round, large heads and firm faces of born fighting men. They had at once nervous energy, and intelligence, and physical power.

* * * * *

It is just as well to say here that Spain is in no sense the poverty-stricken country it is supposed to be. It is felt generally by Anglo-Saxon people that Spain is much behind the times; that she is unprogressive, unalert, and not on the watch to keep up with the rush; that her people are sunk in ignorance and superstition and poverty; that her administrators are at once inept and corrupt; that she is a country of the past; that the sun of her glory and power has set.

All this felt.

And should a statesman of the Anglo-Saxon race

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wish to point to a country that has gone under—he naturally points to Spain. Spain is a dreadful example of the awful plight that might fall upon a nation, if that nation did not look well ahead—if she did not keep for her administrators men who were at once wise, subtle, and pushful. In fact, Englishmen and Americans—Americans especially—are very sorry for Spain. Why they are sorry is not quite so clear as the fact that they are sorry—very sorry indeed.

When an American comes to talk of Spain pity creeps into his voice. And still—well, I must say it though the roof falls. There is less poverty, less hunger, less misery, more genuine prosperity in Spain than there is in America. I tremble as I say this. But say it I must—for it is a fact. Of course, people do not work as hard in Spain as they do in America. But hard work is a blessing much disguised. So disguised is it that I have never in my travels met any one who willingly took it on. I mean real hard work—work with the hands.

No, it seems to me that in the case of the American, pity might well begin at home.

And I will go farther than to say that the man of Spain is better off than the man of America. I will go so far as to say that the man of Spain is better off than the man of England. He has a better time—he has less work to do—he is better fed.

Of course in the big towns of Spain the beggars go for the tourist tooth and nail. There are swarms of them, and from these swarms the observant tourist gets the erroneous impression that Spain is a hungrier country

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PEASANTS OF THE NORTH

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than his own happy, up-to-date land. And the observant tourist at once feels bothered and grieved and sympathetic.

But the reason for the presence of the beggars is a simple one. Spain possesses not that triumph of Anglo-Saxon administration—the atrocious and abominable workhouse system. They don't shut up their beggars as though they were lepers. There are places of shelter to which they may go, but they may please themselves as to whether they stay in them or not. They are allowed freedom. They are allowed to come out into the open and worry the society that has produced them. And this is both a just and good thing. Why should beggars be shut up any more than the thieves who sweat, and steal from, and rob the poor under the ægis of the law? The giving of freedom to the beggar of Spain is a fine and a humane piece of statesmanship. Indeed, it is more than a fine piece of statesmanship. It is a fair piece of statesmanship.

If you are destitute in England or America you are a criminal who is liable to be put in prison. If you are destitute in Spain you are as free to move about as the man who is rich. So let no more be said about the Spanish beggars. They are treated far more fairly and rationally than our own workhouse beggars.

Between Madrid and Zaragoza I saw the people, and the way they lived, in a way that the tourist never sees them. I walked at one stretch well over two hundred miles right through the heart of the country—through the poorest part of Spain. I stopped with the peasants and the mule-drivers at the posadas and ventas and ventorros. I stopped at the peasants' huts along the

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road. In fact, I lived the life of these people. And what did I see?

I saw a working people who were better off than our own working people. A people with more to eat—a people better housed—a sturdier people—a healthier people. In fine, a people who got more out of life. They had plenty of bread and plenty of wine. They took it easy. They did not have to conform as our people have to conform to that sinister and horrible paradox—to kill one's-self to live.

* * * * *

I came out of the café and walked back again down the rambla. It was now about five o'clock in the afternoon.

Just as I was going into the fonda I heard the sound of music lower down in the rambla. I turned and went in the direction of the music, and in a moment I found myself standing in front of a building over which was the sign "La Walkyria." Young men and women were passing in through great doors shaped like church doors. I was puzzled as to what was going on till I caught a glimpse of the inside of the place. It was full of couples who were dancing to the music of a waltz. I went to the door and was just passing in when a man stopped me and asked me for a billete (ticket). Having no ticket, I offered a peseta. But he waved the money aside. I could not get in. I waited for a moment, however, till another man came up to the door from the inside. He wore what seemed to be a decoration on his breast and had the manner of a man of importance. I asked him if

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I could go in just for a vista (view). He pondered for a moment, and I was passed gravely in. I offered to pay the peseta, but he would not hear of it. I was allowed in as a matter of courtesy.

La Walkyria was just a big dance-hall. With much difficulty I dodged and threaded my way through the whirling couples till I got to the other end of it. Here I sat down to take in the scene.

Half way up the hall was a band of about ten performers. The conductor wore a beard. He was smoking a long cigar whilst he was conducting. Indeed nearly all the gentlemen of the band were smoking—all but those who were blowing the wind instruments. The first violin—or rather the gentleman who belonged to it—was indulging in a cigarette.

But the band played with fire and vigour. What the waltz was I don't know. Probably it was a Spanish waltz. The conductor may have composed it himself. He had the face of a musician with ideas.

In the waltz was the joy and the strangeness and the fire of life. The dancers were young—in the first flush of youth. They were at one with the meaning of the thrilling, intense music. Their faces shone, they held each other close as they whirled along. I sat and watched their faces as they passed. Here was a beautiful girl with the glow of love in her eyes as she looked up into the face of him with whom she was dancing. How strange and wonderful is the face of woman when transfigured with the glow of love. Here was a lustrous-faced girl with great, dark eyes. Here was a fair-haired girl with tender, blue eyes. Here were girls passing and repassing and passing again.

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Swinging and whirling to the thrilling music. Dancing the subtly-voluptuous waltz. That strange, intimate, divine dance. Here and there, here and there and around and around went the dancers to the throbbing, swinging measure of the music. It stopped suddenly, this music. And the dancers stopped as if transfixed. And then the music swung out again through the hall and the dance went on and on. The faces passed and passed. It seemed as if it would go on for ever—this whirling, swaying, wonderful blend of music and dancing.

II

When I got back to the fonda I had the luck to come across a Spaniard who could speak a little English. He told me that if I wanted to catch the stage to Seo de Urgel that night I would have to go to Tàrrega, a place about forty kilòmetros to the east of Lèrida. A train was starting from the station in a quarter of an hour, and I picked up my knapsack and hurried out of the fonda to catch it.

I travelled third-class and had a lively time. The carriage was big and long—four or five compartments being run into one. Indeed, it was very like an English third-class railway carriage. The only difference was that there were no cushions on the seats—one sat on wooden benches. But this had its own advantage. There was none of the dust that comes up from the alleged cushions of a third-class carriage in England.

The carriage was filled up with men, women, and children, and a few soldiers who were scattered here and there. As soon as the train started a loud and general

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conversation began. Everybody talked to everybody else. I alone was silent. The man who sat next to me began to talk to me. But at last he gave it up. I acquiesced too often in the wrong place. But for all that I enjoyed the general good fellowship and spirit that existed through the whole carriage.

The train did not stop the length of time at the stations that trains stop in Andalusia. There was just time given for the passengers to get out or in, as there would be in France or England. Time—at least on the railway—was evidently considered to be of more value in Catalonia than in Andalusia.

Soon songs and choruses were going. I liked the songs, but they had not the individuality of the songs of the South of Spain. They did not possess the freeness of melody which true race-songs possess. And there was not the sad note in them. But on the other hand, they were more adapted to the humour and rollicking gaiety of the people in this railway carriage—and one could join in the chorus.

One of the soldiers had a fine baritone voice. He was a bronzed, good looking young yellow of about three and twenty. He was probably going home to see his people. I thought of him and wondered about him as he sang. After he had done singing I managed to ask him if he knew a malaguena—a song of Malaga. No, he did not know one!

It was dark when I got into Tàrrega and I went over to the posada to wait for the stage-coach which was due to start for Artesa de Segre in two hours.

The man who kept the posada was a young, hearty,

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Scotch-looking fellow with a genial manner. When I offered to pay him for my supper he refused to take the money. He seemed to take an interest in me and asked me numberless questions which I did not understand.

Here was the stage at last. I picked up my knapsack and went out to have a look at it whilst the horses were being changed. It looked rather like a picture of an English stage-coach of the days of Dick Turpin. It was perhaps something longer. There were six horses.

I was just getting up to take a seat by the driver when the young, hearty, Scotch-looking fellow touched me on the shoulder. It turned out that he wanted me to pay for my supper. Why he did not take the money when I offered it to him is a mystery that I fear will never be solved. Perhaps he wished to favour me by letting me enjoy the possession of it for an hour.

Off we started with sharp whip-crackings and shoutings and the blowing of a horn. The horses galloped like racers and in a moment we were out of Tàrrega and speeding along a straight road. We were going north! Artesa de Segre lay dead north from Tàrrega. I was glad of it. Every turn of the wheel was bringing me nearer home. I wanted to get back to England.

I handed the cochero (driver) a cigar. He thanked me with a graceful wave of the handle of his whip and at once lit it. It is etiquette all over the world for a passenger on the box of a stage to provide the driver with something to smoke.

The wind was cold and sharp. But it was fine and exhilarating to sit out here in the moonlight watching the horses running along and listening to the cracking of the

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whip and the voices of the cochero and his assistant as they urged the horses to do their best.

Each horse had a resounding name which was called out whenever it showed signs of slackening its pace. If it paid no attention to this the lash-end of the whip cracked like a pistol within an inch of its ear. Rarely did the cochero touch one of the horses with the whip. A crack was enough.

I hardly felt the time passing as I sat here on the box of the rumbling, quick-running coach. It seemed to me that the life of a stage-driver, whether in Spain or anywhere else, must be the finest life in the world. Always to be cracking a whip and going behind six swift-running horses was a picturesque way of getting a living. One was always out in the open whether by night or by day, going, going along. It was a fine life. And there was adventure in it, too. A highwayman might stop you. You might have to drag and pull up your six horses under the menace of death. But there was little real danger even in this, for who ever heard of a highwayman of parts shooting a driver? Always to be going along. To be cracking your whip and sending your horses swiftly along a good, straight road. It was a fine life. A grand, open-air, wonderful life.

We came to a silent, dark village and passed through it filling it with sound and life—the rumble of wheels and the sharp, quick clamping of hoofs of horses, and shouts. In an instant we were out of the dark street—out at the other end and going swiftly along under the moonlight. A solitary dog barked after us, but we cared nothing. We were going on.

We dashed into another village and suddenly stopped

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dead. The cochero was a man of skill and power with horses. A sure-handed, strong-handed man. A man that could bring a horse dead up in the middle of a gallop.

We were standing before two big wooden doors. There was a stirring behind them and bolts were shot back and the doors were swung open and out came men with lanterns—men leading horses. And while the horses were being changed the passengers came out of the body of the coach and looked on. There were six or seven of them. They had been cramped in the darkness all through the glorious ride.

Up! I was up with the cochero again and we were galloping out of the village with six fresh horses. And we went on and on and on through the moonlight—on and on and on through silent villages. On and on and on.

Artesa de Segre. We were here now at the Fonda Nueva. The propietario, Manuel Plens, came out and welcomed us. The horses and the coach were put into the big stable of the fonda. It was two o'clock in the morning and very cold, but Manuel provided us with rum and coffee in the long dining-room.

I found that I would have to wait another twenty hours in Artesa de Segre. The stage-coach ran no farther. Getting up to Seo de Urgel took time. So I shook hands with the cochero and went off with Manuel, who showed me to a comfortable place to sleep.

The next day I wandered around Artesa de Segre. It was quaint and old, and reminded me somewhat of Ateca in the province of Zaragoza, where I had met the strolling players. A place of old courtyards and Moorish

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looking arches. Things generally had an air of going on as they had gone for a thousand years. One part of the town was lower than the other. To get to it one descended some ancient, worn, stone steps.

Those old towns of the past! How delightful it was to wander through them. To go here and there and think and dream. If the stones and pillars and columns and arches of those old towns had voices what could they not tell of. What secrets could they not unfold. Strange old towns.

* * * * *

At ten o'clock that night I went along with Manuel Plens to get a stage which started from the other end of the town. Manuel and I had grown friendly during the day, and he came with me to see that I was put exactly right for the journey.

As we drew near to the coach—which was waiting in the middle of the road—we saw through the darkness a crowd standing in front of it and we could hear high words going. Manuel and I hurried up. A row was going on and blows were on the point of being struck. I could tell this by the way the crowd was beginning to move. When people in a crowd intend to strike each other they invariably work themselves outwards so as to get room to make the blow or the lunge.

But a priest came suddenly up and forced his way right into the middle of the people. The row stopped at once. And then the priest spoke. He was a very tall, slight man, with a deep, grave voice. Evidently he was inquiring into the dispute, for first one man answered

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him and then another. And at last the point at issue—whatever it was—was settled peaceably.

I bade Plens good-bye and started off with the stage. Again I sat on the box with the cochero. When I handed him a cigar he waved the handle of his whip in graceful acknowledgment exactly after the fashion of the first cochero.

At Pons I had to wait three hours for another stage, and as I was tired I thought I might as well have a sleep. I was shown up to a bedroom at the top of the posada. As I was lying down the clear and brilliant light of the moon came full on my face and I got up and managed to pull the curtain so as to shade it off from my face. I lay down, and then there came a knock on the door. The three hours had passed before I seemed to have fallen asleep. I got up and opened the door. It was the old woman of the posada. She held a lantern in her hand, and she turned beckoning me to follow her. I went slowly down the winding staircase of the posada—down into the courtyard—and out through the main door. It was as dark as pitch. The moon had gone down. I followed the old woman and her lantern up the street, and soon I saw ahead of us other lanterns and I could hear the noises of men and horses. And there was the stage. I followed slowly along, half asleep.

It seemed that the stage had been kept waiting for me. I handed my knapsack up to the cochero, and was about to climb up on to the seat with him when a loud-voiced man issued from somewhere through the darkness and stopped me from climbing up. His voice was so loud and his manner was so authoritative that he thoroughly

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wakened me up. He told me that the cochero's seat was full and that I would have to get into the body of the coach. It was so dark that I had not noticed that there were two other men up on the seat with the cochero.

I went round to the door at the back of the coach—opened it—and looked in. It was full of people and their belongings, and I determined that if I was not going to ride on the cochero's seat I would not ride at all. And so the man with the authoritative manner and I began to have it out—he in Catalan and I in English. His voice was loud, but my voice was loud also. And in the end I won. He ordered one of the men off from the cochero's seat. This poor fellow had to stuff himself as well as he could into the body of the coach, and I took his seat in the free open air.

Off we started.

Dawn was coming on when we got to Tiurana. Here we stopped to change horses and get some refreshment. Off before us were the outlines of the far mountains. Our next stop was Oliana.

The sun was upon us with a full brilliant softness when we got to Orgaño. It was a clear, wonderful golden morning. Off to the north, rising and rising, were the mountains through which I had to pass—the Pyrenees. These mountains marked the end of Spain—the end of Catalonia.

In Orgaño we had breakfast in a rough, old, heavily raftered posada. All the passengers but myself were Spaniards—but I felt thoroughly at home with them. We helped ourselves to a sort of vegetable soup and boiled sausages, and bread and red wine. It was a good

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Spanish breakfast and I thoroughly enjoyed it. All that it cost was eighty-five cèntimos.

Here in Orgaño. How beautiful was this mountain village and how beautiful was its name. And how fine and clear and life-giving was the air. And yonder were the summits of the Pyrenees.

Again we were going with the rumbling, quick-running coach. Again the horses were dashing along and the cochero was cracking his whip and shouting. And we dashed on and on and on.

And here was Seo de Urgel. An old town at the foot of the mountains. It was near to twelve o'clock in the day as we got into it.

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XVII.—THE REPUBLIC OF ANDORRA

I

At half-past two in the afternoon I left the posada in Seo de Urgel and faced for Andorra. I had come to the conclusion that the capital of the little republic was about twenty-five kilòmetros away through the mountains. I would get there just about the time that darkness was settling down, providing that my conclusion was right as to the distance. At dinner in the posada I had been given various estimates of it. A jovial-looking priest who sat next to me assured me that it was "treinta cinco" (thirty-five) kilòmetros. A bearded Catalan gave it forth as his opinion that it was but seventeen. He was a person of a hopeful cast of mind as far as the reckoning of distances was concerned. The girl who waited on us at table said it was thirty. And so the estimates wandered up and down. I listened to them with politeness, and in the end I took my reckoning of the distance according to the law of averages.

When I was paying my score the keeper of the posada tried the old familiar game of working off a Filipino peseta upon me in the change that he was giving me. But I rejected it.

Up the main street of the town I trudged with my knapsack on my back. I would be out of Spain now in a

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few hours, and I was feeling glad. It was not that I didn't like the country. It was rather that I had grown tired of the journey. I wanted to get to the end of it, and after that to get to England as quick as possible, so that I could hear once more the good old English language sounding around me. For four months I had heard but little of it. Four months since I had entered Spain! It seemed a long, long time.

The town broke off suddenly and I turned off on to the path that led to the pass going through the mountains. It was a beautiful October afternoon and the sun was shining gloriously. It was warm, but the warmth had in it a quality of freshness and exhilaration. A stimulating, fine, joyous warmth. And the mountains were coloured in a strange and wonderful way. And the air had a quality as of some ethereal, magical wine.

Soldiers! I saw them in the distance winding through the pass. The soldiers of Spain! Red and drab and black and white, and many differing shades, and the glinting from the barrels of Mausers mingled into a blare of colour. I could see them now—one long, slow-winding, straggling line. I stepped from the path and waited. On and on they came. They were up to where I was standing now—and I saluted. These soldiers of Spain!

Men from the whole length and breadth of this fine country—men of different moulds. Hard-faced, powerful-looking Catalans—men from Arragon—sullen-faced men from Castilia—men with the look of the mountains about them—men from Andalusia with Moorish-tinged blood. Men from the north, south, east,

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west, and centre of Spain. Men from the sea-board and mountains and hills and plains. Going along.

They were gone now and I was going alone through the pass. Down beneath me the River Valira sang as it went on its way through the bottom of the valley. Ahead of me and far up above there towered mountains, snow-clad and shining in the sun. Yonder the side of the mountain was cultivated. And yonder a man was keeping watch over cattle that were browsing along the bank of the singing, swift-going river. I could hear the bells tinkling through the strange, wonderful water-song. And through miles of distance I could see the white gleam of a house set high up aloft on the mountain side. At the base of the pass the mountains were green. Higher up they changed to brown, and higher still they changed to dark gold. And up over all was a wonderful crown of soft white.

"Buenos, señor," I said, in salutation to a man who passed me on the path.

He was a mountaineer, old and worn, and round his waist was wound a red cloth. On his head was a strange-shaped hat. He had the hard, strong face of the Catalan.

"Buenos," he said, as he went slowly past.

How different were these mountains from the mountains of the Sierra Nevada! In the Sierra Nevada there was grandeur, but it was the grandeur of bareness and desolation and silence. Here in the Pyrenees there was greenness and verdure and life, and magicalness of colour and outline, and the song of the waters. There was something human in the beauty of the Pyrenees—something that a man might understand.

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"Cuantos kilòmetros frontera?" I asked in my curious Spanish of a man who was driving three mules along the path. I had been going now for a couple of hours, and I was anxious to know how far I was off from the frontier. I felt anxious to be out of Spain. Why I could not have told. But I was beginning to feel excitement as I got nearer and nearer to Andorra.

"Dos horas" (two hours), said the man.

"Ah!" I said to him again. "No cuantos horas—cuantos kilòmetros?"

But he was unable to tell me. He evidently only knew how long it would take him to get his mules there, and I suppose that he—in common with all people—felt that his sort of knowledge was the knowledge. And both of us passed on our way without further exchange of words. For a long time I could hear him cracking his whip behind me in the mountains.

At last I came to a turn in the pass, and before me there opened out a beautiful little valley. It was a perfect oval surrounded by mountains. Off in the middle of it I saw a man coming towards me. I quickened my pace.

"Frontera?" I asked, as we both stopped face to face.

"Si," he answered, and he pointed behind me.

I had passed the frontier without knowing it. I had expected that there would have been some sign to mark the division of the countries—perhaps a station occupied by soldiers or guards. I had expected a rigorous examination of my knapsack. But there was no sign of anything. The frontier was, indeed, but an imaginary line.

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"'CUANTOS KILÒMETROS FRONTERO?' I ASKED"

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The man I had stopped began to tell me a number of things concerning the frontier. He spoke in Catalan. I did not understand all he said, but I got the general drift of it. He knew the very rock, the very stone, through which the imaginary line penetrated. He was a fine, stalwart figure of a man, and I judged him to be about fifty years old. He spoke in rather a loud, boisterous manner—as if he were half drunk. But I may be wronging him. It may have been but the exhilaration of the pure mountain air.

He told me that he belonged to the Republic of Andorra—that he was an Andorrano. I was equally confiding. I told him that I was an Englishman. To this he said "buenos." And we shook hands and left each other, mutually pleased.

So I was out of Spain at last. I was in a country where there were different laws and different people and a different way of looking at life. I felt an immense relief. For the last month in Spain I had felt unsafe. I had felt that something was hanging over me. It may have been that the long, lonesome tramp from Madrid to Zaragoza had got on my nerves. I was not afraid, but I felt unsafe. The feeling was with me even in Seo de Urgel—but a few hours before. And now it was all gone from me. I felt almost as if I could have taken the cartridges out of my revolver.

Over on the left side of the river I could see San Julian. I could see the tower of a church rising up. I crossed a low bridge and soon I was in the village—a quaint, strange village of narrow, short streets paved with round stones. The houses were low and curious-looking

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and very old. One could tell that they were very old by the set and the colour of them. Low, strong-made houses, with thick walls. The dogs that came to see me were not as the dogs of Spain. There was an air of peace about them. One of them even wagged its tail as it came up to me. The people were not as the people of Spain. But where the difference lay I could not have told. It was something, perhaps, in their air. They had the freshness of colour and the build of figure of a people of the north. The women had not the grace of the women of Spain, but they looked fine and strong. From the windows of the houses and from the roofs of the houses there hung great quantities of tobacco leaf. It was there drying, and it filled the air with a curious smell.

I walked through the village at a rapid pace, saluting the people as I passed.

After leaving San Julian I again crossed the Valira. And then it was that the path became a trifle difficult to negotiate. And the reason of Andorra's freedom began gradually to permeate through my mind. Getting soldiers into it and through it would take time, and this time could be prolonged indefinitely by a few resolute men. In fact, it seemed to me that with a hundred well-armed, cool men I could have held this pass against the armies of the world. The republic was evidently a place locked by the mountains at both ends and at both sides.

After labouring with the path for some time it occurred to me that I might as well stop and do a little thinking. So I picked out a nice place and stretched myself out to think, with my knapsack under my head.

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In a moment I was in Granada with my noble friends Santiago and Joaquin. We were having a large and joyous time when Santiago suddenly slapped me on the back—and I woke up! It was pitch dark! I was here in the Pyrenees in the Republic of Andorra—here becalmed, so to speak, on a path that, to say the least, was slightly difficult of negotiation. Why had I fallen asleep? But putting conundrums to myself was only a waste of time. I picked myself up, fumbled my knapsack up on to my back, and proceeded along with caution. I had two high and worthy aims to accomplish. One was to get to the capital of Andorra that night—the other was not to fall over a precipice.

I am not going to describe that path further than to say that it was a path that called for some slight effort. It seemed to go here and there and up and down and everywhere. It was what might be called a path of obstruction. Even though it was so dark I could make it out. One reason was that down beneath me, to my left, I could hear the river rushing along. I could not, of course, walk into the river. The other reason was that above me, to my right, the side of the mountain ran almost sheer up. It was impossible for me to have got lost, even if I had tried. All that I had to do was to move along slowly and easily and in time I would arrive somewhere.

At last I saw lights. It was over on the other side of the Valira. It was surely some village—perhaps Andorra.

I made my way cautiously down the bank and tried to find a bridge. But I failed. Then the thought came into my head to try and ford the river. I bent down to

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see if I could get any idea of the depth of the water by the sound of it as it rushed along. I did get an idea, and the idea was that it was too deep to ford. There was a fulness in the sound of the rushing water that suggested a depth of eight or ten feet. Different depths give different sounds to rushing water. A shallow of a foot or so will have a sharp, harsh sound.

I went farther up, and to my joy I found a bridge. I crossed over it and went towards where the lights were shining. But now a new difficulty presented itself. I sank nearly up to my knees in what seemed to be a bog. On this side of the river there was evidently a strip of flat, wet land.

I could find firm footing nowhere, and in the end I was forced to turn back, cross the bridge again, and make my way up the bank of the river to the path that I had left but a little while before. I had to give up the idea of finding that particular village that night—whether it was Andorra or not.

For a long, long time I worked along the path, and then I saw lights again off over to my left. This time, however, the path seemed to take a bend in that direction. I went on and on, and at last the path led over a bridge across the river and on—straight in the direction of the lights. Soon I could make out the outlines of a house, and then of another house, and then of several. I had got somewhere at last!

Finally I was in the village—but the lights seemed to be all at the other end. It was still very dark just around me. I stopped. It was as well to wait till someone came along so that I could make inquiries.

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"I SANK NEARLY UP TO MY KNEES"

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"Hola!" I shouted. I had just heard a step some distance ahead of me.

"Como se llama esto pueblo?" (What is the name of the village?) I shouted again.

"Andorra," was the reply.

So I had arrived at my destination at last! I had got to the end of my journey. I was here in the capital of the republic—the republic here in the heart of the mountains.

A boy approached me. He was accompanied by a big dog. The dog barked loudly, but there was a note of friendliness in his barking.

I asked the boy to direct me to Calounes' posada, and he took me by the arm and led me through three or four short, steep, rugged streets. The dog followed us. It was still very dark.

At last the boy stopped in front of a big, low house, in the window of which a light was burning. He knocked on the door, and it was opened almost as he knocked. I stepped in through the door into the light.

A man came slowly forward from a group of men who were standing in the middle of a big room. He wore a cap and a sort of blue smock. He was one of the most powerfully built men I had ever seen. Though he was not much over the middle height he gave the impression of immense size. A giant of a man. His head was large, and there was a look of nobility and loftiness in his face. A grand face, and still a simple face. It was Miguel Calounes. He owned the posada.

"Buenas noches," he said.

His voice was hoarse and deep, and there was in it a

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strange sort of vibration. It went through the whole room.

"Buenos," I said, as I took off my knapsack.

And then everybody came forward and began to ask me all sorts of questions at once. Where did I come from? Was I French? Was I English? Why was I going through the mountains? Where was I going to? Did I like Andorra? How long would I stay in the republica? And so on. All of them spoke in Catalan.

I answered their questions as well as my limited stock of Spanish would allow. I told them of my lonesome tramp from Madrid to Zaragoza. I told them that I had been in Granada and Seville. That I had seen bull-fights. That I had seen the great Luis Mazzantini in Madrid. That I had come from London.

Ah, Lòndres! It was a capital just as Andorra was a capital! It was, therefore, "mucha importe," said Miguel Caounes, in his deep, hoarse, vibrant voice. What would I tell them in Lòndres of Andorra?—Andorra, that "bonito terra" (beautiful land), that had been a republic for over a thousand years. What would I tell them in Lòndres of it? Andorra was one of the grandest countries in the whole world!

The men were in no way like the Spaniards, even though they spoke Catalan. They were nearly all big and powerful—though none of them in this respect approached Caounes. I had never seen such men before, and I found it impossible to institute a comparison in my own mind between them and any other men, or any other race that I had ever seen. For more than a thousand years their ancestors had dwelt in these mountains—

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really free. This republic was a republic. Their faces had not the subtlety of expression that would be in the faces of a race whose race interests were more complex and larger. But they were nobler and higher of expression. It was plain to be seen that they were people of simple, straight lives. They had not changed. They were as their ancestors had been hundreds of years before. They had lived outside the world—and not felt the loss.

By this time Calounes' wife had got supper ready for me. It was a very good supper—roast partridge that Calounes had shot himself, light, well-made bread, tomatoes, and plenty of good, rough, honest red wine. I enjoyed it immensely. The negotiating of the path had made me hungry. I complimented Calounes' wife upon her cooking, and she smiled. She was a pleasant-looking, dark-eyed woman of about thirty-five.

After supper I had a cigar—a cigar made in Andorra. It was not as dry as it might have been, but it was all right. After that Calounes showed me to a room, and in a moment I was sleeping the sleep of the just.

I did not see Calounes the next morning when I was having breakfast, and when I asked his wife where he was she told me that he was out in the campo (field). I determined to go out there and see him after I had had a look round Andorra.

The town was small and compact and was built on the slope of the mountain up on the left side of the valley. Though the valley was beautiful the town itself was not what could be called picturesque. It was rather quaint and odd and old of look. There was an air of stillness

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about it. It had slept through the centuries. One felt here that a hundred years of time either way mattered nothing. The blight of the thing that is called Progress had not fallen upon it. The people moved about quietly. Honest-faced, contented-looking people who seemed to have solved the problem of how to get the most out of life. They were as their fathers were before them—as their sons that would come after them. There were no rich amongst them—there were no poor amongst them—there was no vice amongst them. To them the arts and the sciences were a quantity unfelt and unknown. They had missed a little, but in the missing of it they had grasped much. They were wise with the supreme wisdom of simplicity. These people who lived in this quaint old town of the mountains! A town of six hundred and sixty people—six hundred and sixty people who lived far away from the noise and the uproar, and the stress and the strife and the confusion, and the unrest and the misery of the great world that lay off in the distance—six hundred and sixty people who lived in peace.

Here was the Casa de la Valle. Herein the men of the Government of the republic sat and deliberated. Above the great door was a motto in Latin and the arms of Andorra. I knocked on the door, but there came no answer. And then I went down the steep road that led to the bridge that crossed the river. From the bridge I turned back to look at the little town.

There was Calounes, working off over in a field on the other side of the valley. I knew him by his great figure and by his smock and cap. On I went till I got near enough to hail him. He turned when he heard the hail

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and beckoned to me. And I came quickly up and climbed over the low stone wall and was in the field. I shook hands with Calounes.

They were gathering the bean-vines and putting them into bags—Calounes and another man and a boy and a woman. When filled the bags were put on the back of a donkey and sent off to Calounes' house in charge of the boy.

I helped.

After an hour or so the boy brought some food, and at the invitation of Calounes I sat down with the rest of them to partake of it. Calounes cut slices of the loaf of black bread and passed them round, and we all took turns at drinking the red wine "a trago" out of the leathern bota. By this time I had become an expert in the art of drinking wine "a trago." It was, after all, the best way possible of drinking it. One got the full taste and flavour of the wine.

After we had eaten I prevailed upon Calounes to leave his toil and come with me into the town. I wanted him to show me around. And we went together up to the Casa de la Valle. The great door was locked. Calounes knew where the key was, but this was of little use, because of the fact that the permission of the President of the republic had to be obtained before a stranger would be allowed in. We searched through the town for the President, but we could not find him.

That night after dinner there was a great argument in the posada between an Andorrano and a Catalan. The Catalan said that Spain was a wonderful country, and that Andorra was just so-so. He also said what a wonderful

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advantage it would be to the republic if it belonged to Spain. But the Andorrano did not see it like that. He argued altogether in an opposite direction. We all listened with close attention. I was able to follow the argument well enough, and now and then I joined in. But this I had to stop. Making myself understood was too difficult. Caounes never joined in the argument at all. But he listened as though the matter under discussion was a thing of life and death interest to him. I began to watch his face, and it seemed to me that his face reflected all the anxiety that had beset his race through a thousand years. Through the past centuries another Miguel Caounes, and another, and another, had listened to arguments such as this before a great log fire such as was now burning before us. Men of the olden time in Andorra had listened to words such as the words that were going now, and had been prepared to shed their blood in support of what was set forth on their side. The blood had come and gone from their faces as they listened, just as it was coming and going now from the face of Miguel Caounes. Their hands had clenched as his were clenching now. They had been as ready to fight as he was now. He rose suddenly. He could stand the argument no longer. His great frame shook and he struck the table in front of the Catalan with his clenched fist.

"Andorra siempre (for ever) Andorra!" he exclaimed. "Andorra no España! Andorra no Francia! Andorra siempre Andorra!"

The argument stopped dead. Caounes sat down.

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II

After that we went into the outer room. Here men and women and children were stripping the bean-pods from the bean-vines. An immense heap of vines was before them. As the pods were stripped off they were thrown into baskets. Candles were in different parts of the room. The scene was pleasant and natural and picturesque.

I sat down in front of a basket. Calounes' sister, who sat next to me, showed me what to do, and in a moment I was working away with the best of them. The work was going on in the midst of loud talking and loud laughter. All sorts of jokes were going round. I enjoyed myself very much.

Late the next afternoon I met the President of the republic, José Calva. He was a young, dark-looking, man, about thirty-seven years old. He did not at all look like an Andorrano. Had I met him in Spain I would have taken him for an Andalusian. He had the complexion and the build and the bearing of a man from Granada. The difference, perhaps, was that he had an alert, quick look in the eyes.

Calounes introduced me to him, and I asked permission to go through the house of State—the Casa de la Valle. He gave the permission readily, and said that Calounes would show me over it.

I thanked him, and off I went with Calounes to get the key of the great door. It turned out that it lay on

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the ledge over the door of a house quite close to the posada. Calounes just went inside and reached up for it.

It was an immense iron key.

We went to the Casa de la Valle, and Calounes opened the great door and we entered into the courtyard. Then we ascended a flight of wooden stairs, and Calounes showed me a schoolroom. Herein were taught the children of Andorra.

It was in a cupboard in this room that Calounes got the key of the council chamber. This chamber was oblong in shape and, in a way, was one of the most impressive places I had ever seen. The window at the end of it, where the President sat when in council, disclosed a view of the mountain towering across the valley. Hung on the wall were twenty-four long cloaks—twelve on either side. And over each cloak was a three-cornered hat. These cloaks and hats were the first things that caught the eye as one entered the chamber. They gave to it an air of mystery and secrecy and profound silence. Twenty-four long cloaks and twenty-four hats. They did not seem as if men had ever worn them. They seemed as beings of themselves. The room looked as a room wherefrom might issue secret mandates for the doing of sudden and violent death. Herein might have sat some Vehmgericht. Herein might have sat stern and terrible men—apostles of extermination. A long room on the walls of which were hung twenty-four long, dark cloaks. Darkness was coming into it now, for the sun had gone down behind the mountains. A strange-looking room. From it had come wisdom and light! But still

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the effect of it was sinister and fearsome. I turned and looked towards the other end of it. I could just make out a great shadow in the darkness. It was Miguel Calounes. I went towards him.

* * * * *

Calounes was now holding up a light in a small room that lay off from the chamber of council. He was showing me a picture of President Faure receiving a deputation from the Government of Andorra. Calounes was explaining to me who the deputies were in his deep, strange, vibrant voice. But I was scarcely heeding what he was saying. Instead, I was watching him and thinking of him. As he stood there holding the light he seemed to me to be the finest and noblest-looking man I had ever seen. His great figure and the loftiness of the expression of his face made me feel that here was indeed man as God had intended that man should be. This fine Miguel Calounes! A freeman descended from a race of freemen. This man of the mountains and the open air. This fine tiller of the soil.

At last we turned and went back through the council chamber and down the stairs and across the courtyard and through the great gate.

III

The next morning Miguel Calounes began to tell me about a friend of his who kept a posada in Soldao. Soldao was a place five hours' journey through the mountains from Andorra, and, according to Calounes, the best

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thing I could do was to put up at his friend's posada when I got there, and the morning after to continue my journey to Hospitalet, the first town lying over the French frontier. Hospitalet, however, was only nine hours' journey from Andorra, and I failed to see why I should make a two days' job out of it. I put this to Calounes. But he paid no attention to my point, but went on again to tell me about his friend who kept the posada, and how necessary it was for me to wait there in Soldao and continue my journey into France the morning after. At different times through the whole of the day he kept telling me this in his deep, curiously vibrant voice. Why he should recur to it so often puzzled me. Surely I could march nine hours in one day.. But the reason of his insistence in the matter came to me—when it was too late! Through disregarding his injunction I came as close as a man may come to death.

* * * * *

This little mountain town lying out of the world! I would leave it the next morning and never come back to it. I thought of this as I went round with Colounes listening to its story. He was telling me the story of this town from the beginning. I could not understand all the words he was saying, but I could grasp the thread of his meaning. And he told of an incident that had happened. He told me in the direct way—the way in which a man is apt to tell of a thing he has either seen or experienced. It related to the calling of the men of Andorra to arms—to the hurry and excitement and the anxiousness that come upon men when suddenly menaced with destroying,

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horrible invasion. Lights burned up into the skies from behind the mountains, said Calounes. They were coming! And Leopardo came up and called out the men of Andorra! I asked Calounes how long ago it was since it had happened. "Quinientos años" (five hundred years), he answered.

But to him the happening was as if it were but a happening of yesterday. The feeling of the time had been transmitted to him through his ancestors here in these mountains. They had fought and told their sons, and their sons had told their sons, and so the tale of the anxious time had come down through the centuries to Miguel Calounes. This fine Calounes! I turned to look at him as I walked by his side. Surely this man was a man such as the immortal Hofer—Hofer the peasant who thwarted and withstood the horrible, tremendous destroyer —Napoleon.

That night after dinner we again sat round the great fire of logs in the posada and talked till a late hour. But there was no argument such as there had been the night but one before. The Catalan had gone back to Spain—to Seo de Urgel. So we just drank our wine, by the light of the flames and the redness of the burning logs, smoked, and took it generally easy. To me the scene hardly seemed real. It was as if I were drinking with men of a time gone by hundreds of years. Or it was as if I were drinking with men of a time distant yet from us by hundreds of years. The scene did not seem real. But the wine was real and the burning logs were real, and the great figure of Calounes and the others were real. And outside could be heard the roaring of the

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wind from the mountains sweeping through the valley and through the darkness. Now and then it swept in upon us suddenly as we sat by the fire. And at intervals was heard the barking of dogs. And the outer door of the posada kept opening and shutting as some one went out or came in, letting in upon us a stronger than usual thrust of the wind. I felt as a man from the outside—as one would feel who had come in at night amongst strangers. I had been here now for two days, and still I felt as if I had come in from the darkness but a moment before. I was here sitting by the fire trying as well as I could to understand what was being said around me. These men of Andorra were strangers, but they were in no way like any strangers I had ever come upon before. Though I did not understand them I still felt at home with them. I was glad to be here drinking wine with them—listening to their voices—sitting with them before the flames and the redness of the logs.

In came José Calva, the President of the republic. And Calounes arose, and he and Calva went off over to the other end of the posada to talk over something. They were soon back again by the fire, and the President sat down and joined us. Calounes' wife got a jug of wine for him.

The President told me that the population of the republic was something over five thousand two hundred. It had had much about the same number of people in it for the last few hundred years. All the men were trained in the use of arms, and all would be called upon to serve their country if the occasion arose. At a time of war in Andorra there would be no place for the valiant, patriotic,

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"AFTER DINNER WE AGAIN SAT ROUND THE GREAT FIRE OF LOGS"

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stay-at-home shouters. All would have to do their duty. And a good thing, too. Every man in every country should be trained and broken in to the use of arms.

The republic was forty-seven kilòmetros in length, said Calva. I asked him as to its width, and he informed me that it had no width to speak of. It was just a chain of valleys cutting through the mountains, and connected one with the other by narrow, difficult passes.

And so José Calva sat and chatted before the fire. He was most likely the one and only really democratic ruler in the whole world. My knockings round in different republics had forced upon me the conclusion that the republican form of government was bad. I had lived in the United States—the great sham republic. I had lived long enough there to shudder at the bare mention of the word republic. But I must confess that Andorra made me think that perhaps there might be some magic hidden deep down in the word. That it was a fine, glorious word if the right people gave utterance to it.

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XVIII.—ANDORRA TO SOLDAO

As Caounes was bidding me good-bye the following day he again told me about his "amigo" (friend) who kept the posada in Soldao. I should stop there and wait till the next day to continue my journey to Hospitalet! I laughed and told him it was all right, and I set out, with my knapsack on my back, after shaking hands all round.

When I was about a mile out of Andorra I heard the ringing of horses' hoofs in the distance behind me. Three mounted men were coming along the path in my direction. I stopped and began to think. One could never tell what was going to happen in a strange country! But I dismissed the thought of danger the moment it entered my mind. I felt instinctively that I was all right in this republic. I was not travelling through Castilia now—Castilia where lived the people of the sullen faces. I was all right!

The horsemen turned out to be José Calva himself and two Frenchmen, one of whom belonged to Hospitalet. They were going to the next village.

On we went together. A man afoot could travel as quick as a horseman along this path, and indeed quicker, for there were places where Calva and his companions had to dismount and drag up their horses after them.

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Calva spoke to me of the difficulty of the camino (path) which ran through the republic. He told me a little story, which I gathered was to this effect:—An Andorrano, living in Andorra, had gone over to Seo de Urgel and had become fascinated with a piano he had seen there. He thought that it would be a good thing to have in the house, and that the wife might like the look of it, so he began to bargain with the Spaniard for it. In the end the Andorrano gave a horse for the piano. And he was filled with jubilation because of getting it so cheaply. He had beaten the Spaniard in the bargaining. But, alas! there appeared a rift in the lute. How was he to get his property to Andorra? It was too heavy and awkward to put on the back of a mule, and the path was such that it was impossible to draw it. He tackled the Spaniard as to this, but the Spaniard was adamant. The piano was no longer his, and the Andorrano could do with it as he willed! Either he could take it away, or he could leave it where it was. The upshot of the matter was that it turned out to be a dear piano for the Andorrano, for it took eight men eight days to get it to Andorra—a distance of about seventeen miles from Seo de Urgel. The story was instructive. And Calva laughed out loud when I managed to make the point clear to him that, bad though the road was, it was a good road for Andorra.

When we arrived at the village we went into the posada to get a fraternal drink together ere we parted. It turned out that the three of them were going to have their horses shod. Over our jugs of wine Calva and I conversed as well as we were able, and the last thing I

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remember telling him was to be sure and always keep his road bad—the road that ran through his dominions. It was fifty times better than keeping his powder dry.

The next village I saw was on the left side of a rather narrow valley. It had a curious air of stillness about it. When I got close up to it I saw what was the matter. It was deserted. It looked older than the other villages. Standing right up above it in a cleft on the side of the mountain was an old ruin that looked as if it were once a Moorish castle. I could hardly understand such a castle being so far north as Andorra, but there it was before my eyes. The deserted village—alone here in the mountains—produced in me a feeling of fear. The sun was shining brightly upon this place that was dead. Had I seen it at night I would not have cared. But to see it now in the gleaming and brightness of the sun made me feel afraid. Death and stillness awe a man. When this village was alive and going it might have held three hundred souls. And it was here in a lonesome valley in the mountains overlooked by an old, mournful ruin. Why had the people left it? I wondered about this as I passed quickly on.

The path now led me almost straight up over the summit of a mountain. When I got to the top of it I looked back. I could see down before me the chain of valleys that formed the Republic of Andorra. I could see them as they wound through the mountains, and the narrow passes that connected them—the links of the chain. And I could see right off into Spain—into the province of Catalonia. There was Seo de Urgel! And farther off were mountains again. A bright river was

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"SHE POINTED TO A BIG, LOW WHITE HOUSE"

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winding through them. And there were plains. And lakes. And off behind them again were mountains—shaping up dim and blue.

I felt as if I were on the very top of the world.

I turned, and there was Soldao—higher up still. As I was working my way up towards it I saw a woman. She was coming down the path. Where was the posada, I asked. She pointed to a big, low white house. That was the posada!

Soldao was a place of but seven or eight houses. A place built up on the top of a dazzling whiteness. All around it was snow and beneath it were mountains covered with snow. The tops of the houses were covered with snow. And above all the sun was shining brightly. But there was no warmth in the brightness. A moment or so before I had been warm from the exertion of climbing. But now I felt cold. I had hardly got up on to the level upon which the village stood before I felt the cold. The chill fell on me suddenly. And I decided that the best thing after all for me to do was to break my journey here. I would take the advice of Calounes and wait till the morning before I pushed on for Hospitalet.

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XIX.—TO HOSPITALET

In the shed adjoining the posada a middle-sized man was raking straw. I hailed him and told him that I had come from Andorra, and that Miguel Calounes had told me to call here and put up till the morning. It was all right. The man was very friendly. He was the "amigo" of Miguel Calounes! On the morrow a party was leaving the posada for Hospitalet. I could join them! And he wound up by telling me to go into the posada and get something to eat. They would provide well for any one who came from Miguel Calounes! At this he resumed his work and I went into the posada.

Inside the usual fire of logs was blazing away. Before it sat an old man and an old woman. They were evidently the father and mother of the man outside. On the fire a great pan of potatoes was boiling.

The old woman had a shrewd, clever face. She looked very like an Irishwoman. She asked me a great number of questions concerning myself, and where I came from and where I was going. She was a clever old woman, but she was not much used to seeing strangers, for she asked me if I were French. I had been asked this question when I first got into Andorra. And, indeed, I had been asked it in Spain—in the province of Catalonia and even

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in parts of Castilia. I who of all men looked least like a Frenchman.

The old man had no curiosity about me at all. He just looked at me when I came in first, and then he turned his head and blinked at the fire—in the manner that he had been blinking, probably, for years.

I stopped the old woman's questions by telling her that I wanted something to eat. She smiled and clapped her hands loudly. A young woman came in. I could see that she was the wife of the man who was working outside. One of the reasons why this was apparent was because of the expression of the old lady's face when she entered. It marked the sign of the strained relation between her and the younger woman. Mother-in-law and daughter-in-law evidently did not always pull well together. Andorra, of the perfect government, was, alas! no better off in this respect than was any other place. For a moment I felt sad.

But I was soon cheered by the sight of a good meal. The young woman set it out for me in the great room of the posada. The meal was what some people might call rough—but it was straight and honest. There was plenty of grilled meat, plenty of bread, and plenty of wine. The walk and the cold had made me tremendously hungry.

After I had finished eating I felt like a king. And I began to think about Hospitalet. Why should I take another day in getting to my journey's end? Here was I feeling fit as a fiddle—the sun was still well up over the mountains—and I was only four hours' march, or climb, or whatever it might be, from Hospitalet. Ought I to have a go for it?

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I ought! And up I got from the table, feeling strong and optimistic through food and wine. And I walked out of the posada to interview the man who was raking the straw. I wanted to find out how many hours of sunlight were still left to me.

He told me that I had three hours of sun and about half an hour of twilight. This would leave me half an hour short, but I felt fit enough to pull up that half-hour, and even if I didn't pull it up I would be near enough to see through the darkness the lights of Hospitalet.

A moment after I had paid my score to the shrewd-looking old woman, I had my knapsack strapped well upon my back, and I was going along the path at a rattling rate. As I was going off I heard the man who was raking the straw shouting out something after me. But I paid no attention to him. I had no time to listen to advice if I were going to make Hospitalet that night. I felt strong and swift enough to go anywhere. Besides, advice was a thing made to be disregarded!

I never felt so well in my life as I went swiftly along and up. I was still some distance from the actual summit of the Pyrenees, but I felt that I would soon remedy that. I was in great climbing form.

There was snow all over the place, and it was cold, but I could have followed the path with my eyes shut, so to speak. It was better now than it had been at any time since I had entered it at the other end of the republic.

And I began to wonder more than ever why Miguel Caounes had wanted me to break the journey at Soldao.

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He evidently did not think much of my climbing powers if he thought a nine hours' climb would do me up!

These were my thoughts as I went quickly and gaily along. The path had now become very broad, and it curved up the side of the mountain in a half-spiral. I could see it up above me. I could see it down below me. A good clear, broad path.

After about an hour's climb I came upon a party of camineros (road-menders). They were making the path still better than it was. And here I might say parenthetically that the time came when I cursed these camineros and all their deeds and works. Mountain paths are curious and wonderful affairs that are best left to Nature and to the foot of man and to the hoofs and feet of animals. If a man can't follow a trail he has no business going on his own through mountains. And making a road on one part of the trail spoils the eye for the rest of the trail. The road is easy to follow and the eye becomes lazy and loses the sharpness that is forced upon it through the trail becoming faint—as it does when passing over a rocky place.

I asked these road-menders the distance it was to Hospitalet. The answers I got were even more varied than were the answers I got in Seo de Urgel when I asked the people at dinner in the posada how far it was from there to Andorra.

The first road-mender said it was four hours, the next said it was three hours, and the man after him said it was six hours. No, he corrected himself, did this last man. He said it was "cinco medio" (five and a half). He wished to be exact. He was a man of an honest and

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conscientious turn of mind. There were seven camineros doctoring the road, and all of them gave me different answers. They were stationed about fifty yards from one another, and I thought I would ask them all for the humour of the thing.

After I left the camineros I noticed the road getting soft. They had been grading it and had evidently been covering it over with a coating of earth. It was then that I began to bless them in the backward sense, for there is nothing so trying as a soft road when one is climbing. A man slips back nearly half a step for every step he takes.

And suddenly it began to snow heavily.

But I worked along as hard as I could, for it would not do to lose any time. I had to pull up half an hour through starting late from the posada in Soldao.

But whatever else I had counted on I had not counted on a road, or trail, that was soft at a height of something over ten thousand feet above the level of the sea. I began to curse the camineros afresh. But I soon stopped that. I needed all my breath for work that was before me.

The road still wound in a half-spiral up above me, but I could tell that I was up near the summit from the look of the mountains around me.

By this time the continual slipping back at every step had begun to tire me, but I worked away till suddenly I was struck right in the eyes with a clean drive of snow. For a moment I wondered what had happened.

And then it dawned upon me. I was on the summit, and had been struck in the face by a hard wind that was

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sweeping right across it—a wind that drove the snow before it.

I waited for a moment—and the wind veered a little. I again stepped out over the path. It was easier walking now. There was no climbing to be done. The camineros had been at work here—even on the summit—for the path had been treated exactly in the way it had been treated lower down. I could tell this as I walked along.

There were times when the drive of snow blinded me, but I kept going as quickly as I could. And then all at once there was no path at all. Nothing but snow. But I pressed on in the direction in which I was going. It would not do for me to get nervous. And soon I came up to it again. It was the same broad path that I had been on before—the path that the camineros had graded —had been working upon. Just at the beginning of it I noticed, or thought I noticed, a rather faint trail that branched off to the left. For the moment it struck me that possibly this might be the trail going down to Hospitalet. The snow had pretty well drifted it over, but it seemed to me that I could make out the line of it as it ran along. However, I decided to have nothing to do with it—for here was the broad path!

I was going down now as hard as I could. I was enough below the summit to be sheltered from the hard wind and the blinding drive of the snow. I could see the snow now and then as it was being whirled in clouds up above my head.

And then the path suddenly stopped again. There was nothing before me but snow.

I turned and began to climb up to the summit again

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—this time slipping at every step as I had slipped when climbing up to it from the other side. There was no time for me to stop to think about anything at all. I had to get on. My instinct told me that it was useless for me to press on over the snow as I had done when I had lost the path in the first place. And I felt too that the faint trail that I had seen branching off to the left on the summit was the right trail—that I would have to follow it to get to Hospitalet. I had completely lost my bearings, but I had been in mountains before—and I had followed a slight, faint trail before. And I knew also of the fact that a sort of sixth sense guides a man, used to mountains, over a path where other beings—men or animals—had been in the habit of going before—however faintly the path, or trail, showed. Danger but sharpened the senses. The reason that men got lost was because they lost their heads when they got into difficulties. The great thing was to keep oneself easy.

It was darker now than when I had started from Soldao, but the sun had not yet gone down. Though there was no shining from it, I could tell by the colour of the sky off to the west that it was still well up. I would have time to get to Hospitalet if I had any sort of luck. All I had to do was to keep easy and not lose my head. Three things had worked against me:—My own foolishness in leaving Soldao—the spoiling of the trail by the camineros—and the snow.

But there was no use thinking of that now! The thing for me to do was to get up to the summit and find the trail that I saw branching off and follow it. I knew that if I could manage this I would be all right. I could

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not be more than five kilòmetros from Hospitalet—about three miles!

I was up on the summit again and fighting the driving, blinding snow. It was now intensely cold. I worked my way over towards the place where I had seen the trail. But when I got there there was nothing—nothing but a dead stretch of snow. I was lost.

There was no good in disguising the fact to myself. I was lost. The trail had been drifted completely over since I had been last there. I had not been away more than half an hour—and it was gone! I knew by the set of the mountains beyond that I was looking for it in the right direction. It lay off over there—where I was looking—but it was more than I dare think of to try and follow it.

For a moment I thought of going over to the other side of the summit, and finding the path that went down to Soldao. It would not take me very long to get to the posada in Soldao, where there would be a good fire and shelter and safety. But there were two things against the carrying-out of that idea. One was that I might not find the path on the other side—the snow might have drifted it over—and the other was that I hardly liked to show the people in Soldao what a fool I had been.

The cold wind was still driving the snow around in clouds. I was half blinded and chilled to the bone. Whatever I was going to do it would not do for me to stop on this summit. The cold would surely get ahead of me, and I would be found dead by the next people who came along.

So I went back again along the path that ended

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nowhere. Soon I was going down the slope from the summit. I was out of the reach of the thrust of the hard wind that would have made a dead man of me. And at last I was at the end of the path and facing the blank of snow. The path that the camineros had made! It had, indeed, turned out to be a blind path, going nowhere. But for it I would have taken the trail that I was sure now must have been the right one—the trail going to Hospitalet. I might, of course, be mistaken—no man was infallible. But I felt that I was not mistaken.

It was coming on to darkness now, and the idea came to me to go over the snow in front of me. I might have the luck to come across another trail. There would be surely more than one going in the direction I wanted to go. And even if there were not it was better for me to keep moving anyhow.

I went along for awhile, and then I made out in the half darkness ahead of me an object that looked like a great round rock. A hundred yards or so from it the snow was all gone from under my feet, and I found myself walking on loose stones.

When I got to the object I found that it was a circular hut built of stones and shaped like a hive. I walked slowly round it. There was the entrance into it —a space about three feet high and two feet broad. But the snow had partly drifted up the space.

I cleared away the snow with my foot, and bending my head down into the space I struck a match and peered in. As the match flared I noticed the immense thickness of the wall of the hut. This hut was made to stand

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"I MADE OUT AN OBJECT THAT LOOKED LIKE A GREAT ROUND ROCK"

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the frightful wind-pressure that drove along when great storms were raging here on the mountain tops. A hut built in the ordinary way would be blown to pieces. But this hut would stand the fiercest hurricane that ever blew. Not only was it immensely strong, but its shape would not allow the wind to get a hold on it. A circular hut of immense power, shaped live a hive. It was evidently built as a storm-shelter for shepherds—or travellers.

Some one had sheltered in it—how long ago I could not tell. I was standing now in the centre of it holding a match up in my hand and looking round. The curve of the roof above the centre was about eight feet high. Near my feet was a small pile of dull white ashes—the remains of a wood fire. The floor to the right of the space through which I had entered was covered with a heap of very light twigs. I bent down and touched them. They were dry—dry as a bone. I was in luck. I could stay here till the morning came.

I took off my knapsack and sat down. And then the cold struck into me. It seemed to be almost as cold as it was up on the summit. I was all right when climbing or walking. But almost the moment I stopped exerting myself the cold fastened on me.

The whole thing had been my own fault. I had been guilty of knowing too much—of being over-confident. Had I listened to Miguel Caounes in the first place this would not have happened. I had by rare good luck found a place of shelter, but I was as yet by no means out of the wood. I was still in danger—a great deal of danger. If the temperature were to drop still lower, suddenly—as it well might, it being the night of

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October 24—it was hard to tell what would happen. I was lost, but I didn't mind that very much. Finding my way—in daylight—was the easiest thing going. I would be almost certain to see the trail down in the mountains beneath me when the light came in the morning. If I failed to see it there was even then a means of finding my way that was absolutely sure. I was over the summit of the mountains and all I had to do was to follow down the first stream I came to. This would naturally run down into a bigger stream, and I would follow the stream down and down till it came to the main water-course running through the chain of mountains. Along the main water-course I would be certain to come across places where people lived—and that in a very short time. No, finding my way was nothing. What I was afraid of was the dreary wait of at least twelve hours in the darkness—and the cold.

Suddenly an idea came to me and in a moment I was outside of the hut and fastening my knapsack up on to my back again. My idea was to try and find Hospitalet. I could not be very far from it, and if I got up on to a higher elevation I might see the lights shining from it. It seemed to me that the elevation over on the other side of the gorge would be high enough for the purpose. I would be all right if I could only see the lights of Hospitalet. I could then make my way down to it slowly and cautiously. It was risky, but then it was risky staying in the hut through the whole of the long night. There was nothing in it with which I could make a fire—nothing but the twigs on which I would have to lie through the night if I were forced to come back to shelter in it again. Burn-

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ing them was out of the question. The wood that had been in the hut had all been burned up. Before I left it I took note of its surroundings. Two big boulders lay off from it.

I made my way slowly across the gorge. When I was some distance over I turned to take another look at the hut. I wanted to mark its position well in my mind, so that I would be able to know it if coming towards it from a distance. Yes, I could find it easily enough. From where I stood it formed, with the two boulders, a rough triangle. The triangle so formed could vary but little in general appearance even if I approached it from another direction. I was all right as far as finding the hut was concerned.

I turned and went on again towards the elevation. I had not gone far before I heard the faint roaring of water. But I went on, hoping for the best. It might not be running between me and the place where I wanted to go!

And the roaring became louder.

Luck was against me. A torrent was hurling along at the foot of the elevation I wanted to climb. I had either to ford it or go back to the hut and pass the night.

I decided to ford it. In life a man must take a chance, and besides, a torrent running down at such an angle could at the most be no more than three feet deep. It made a lot of noise, but that was nothing.

I went along it to try and find a place where there were stones going across so that I might get over dryshod if possible. But I failed to find stepping-stones and I just plunged right across. The shock was sharp but

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short. The water caught me up to the middle, and I was nearly knocked over by its rush. But in an instant I was climbing quickly up the elevation on the other side.

I was soon on the top of it and looking around. But I could see nothing. It was fairly clear where I stood, but away down beneath me it was black. It was a strange sort of night as far as light was concerned—clear in some places and black in others. There was hardly a trace of wind. It had died down—at least where I was.

There was another elevation still higher up, and I thought I would go up there and see if I could see anything. Up I went. But it was the same thing. There was nothing but a thick darkness away down beneath me. Even if I were looking in the right direction, and even if the lights of Hospitalet were shining ever so clearly, I could not have seen them through a darkness such as this. A revolving light could hardly have pierced it. It was like a wall.

There was nothing for it but to go back to the hut and stick it out there till morning.

It was then that I noticed that my trousers were frozen stiff on me. The cold was sharper than I had thought. There was even a rim of ice around the bottom of my jacket, where it had touched the water as I was fording the torrent. Some of the water had splashed in my face. I had not noticed it at the time, but it was brought to my mind now. My eyebrows were frozen.

However, I made my way down the elevation—and down the one beneath—and across the torrent again—and over to the hut. There was only one thing to be

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done, and that had to be done quickly. I must get off my frozen clothes!

I got in through the space—and struck a match. There was the heap of light twigs upon which I would have to lie till daylight came! There were the dull white ashes of the last fire that had been made in the hut. If I could only make a fire! But there was nothing to be gained by letting my mind dwell upon that. I must make the best of it.

I struck another match and tried to stick the unlighted end of it in a crack between the stones of the wall. It fell to the ground. Then I stuck one into the crack and lit it afterwards. It seemed to me that everything I did took ten times longer than usual.

My knapsack was on the ground now and I was sitting on it, trying to get off my boots. It seemed as if I would never be able to get them off. Once I thought I would have to cut them off with a big, sharp Spanish knife I carried — the knife that had been flung in the row in Granada. I wished I were in Granada now—where it was warm!

My boots were off at last. And then I got off my stockings. My feet were already numbed with the cold. I had been none too soon. I was in the dark now. The match up above me seemed to have gone out hours before.

I had everything off now—coat, vest, trousers, drawers, shirt and undershirt—everything. I stood naked—shivering. And then I opened my knapsack and fumbled out my other undershirt, and drawers, and a pair of socks. They were dry. I had kept them wrapped up

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in a big piece of oiled paper—that I had also got in Granada. I kept thinking about Granada—where it was warm.

I lay down then on the heap of twigs with my knapsack under my head. I covered myself up as well as I could with the part of my clothes that were dry. I coiled myself up as much as I possibly could in a circle.

I can't describe the night I passed in that hut. All that I can say is that it was horrible. I never slept through the whole of the time. I had one long fight with the cold.

* * * * *

The dawn was showing at last through the open space of the hut. For the last few hours I had been staring at that space waiting for it to come. And it had come at last.

I was dressing myself. My trousers were still stiff with the frost, and so were my boots. But walking would soon cure that.

I was so stiff and used up when I got outside of the hut that I felt as if I could hardly walk at all. But after going a hundred yards or so I limbered up a little. And then I saw the trail just as I thought I would see it. It was away down beneath me—about a mile and a half off.

And to my joy I saw a party of three men crossing a stream that lay just beyond it. They had two mules with them. I hailed them and hurried forward as fast as I could. I was glad to see any one. And besides, I wanted to make sure if I were going in the direction of Hospitalet.

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THE END OF THE JOURNEY

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They were coming towards me. The mules were heavily laden. But when I was hardly more than half a mile away from them they disappeared. Where they disappeared to I could not make out.

I soon came up to the place where I had seen them last. But I could make nothing of it. The whole thing looked mysterious. I could see no place where two mules and three men would be likely to disappear.

I was feeling weary.

And then I heard the tinkle of bells off behind me, and there coming along was a string of mules and men. Seven men and seven mules. I waited for them to come up.

Yes, I was on the right path! They were going to Hospitalet themselves. They were the party that had left Soldao that morning—the party that I could have gone with had I waited. They had come by a short cut through the mountains.

I went on with them. We were still about six kilòmetros away from Hospitalet. When I climbed up the elevation the night before—to look for the lights—I had not been as near to it as I thought.

* * * * *

After something over an hour's journey we turned to the left out of the pass, and there before us was a little town flashing with white in the sun—a town of but a hundred and forty souls—but still a haven. A place where I could get food and shelter and what I needed most—rest. My journey was over—my journey that had had its good times and its bad times—that had had its

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strange, wonderful interest, and its loneliness, and its perils. I had come through the whole length of Spain—a fascinating, beautiful country, peopled with a strange people. I had known the fine, gay Andalusians — the sullen Castilians—the dignified people of Arragon—the hard, strong Catalans. I had eaten out of the same pot with the people in country posadas—I had lived in the best hotels—I had tramped hundred of miles through its plains and mountain chains.

And now the journey was over. I was in France. Here was Hospitalet.

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